

*The Vertebrate Animals  
of  
Leicestershire & Rutland  
Montagu Browne*

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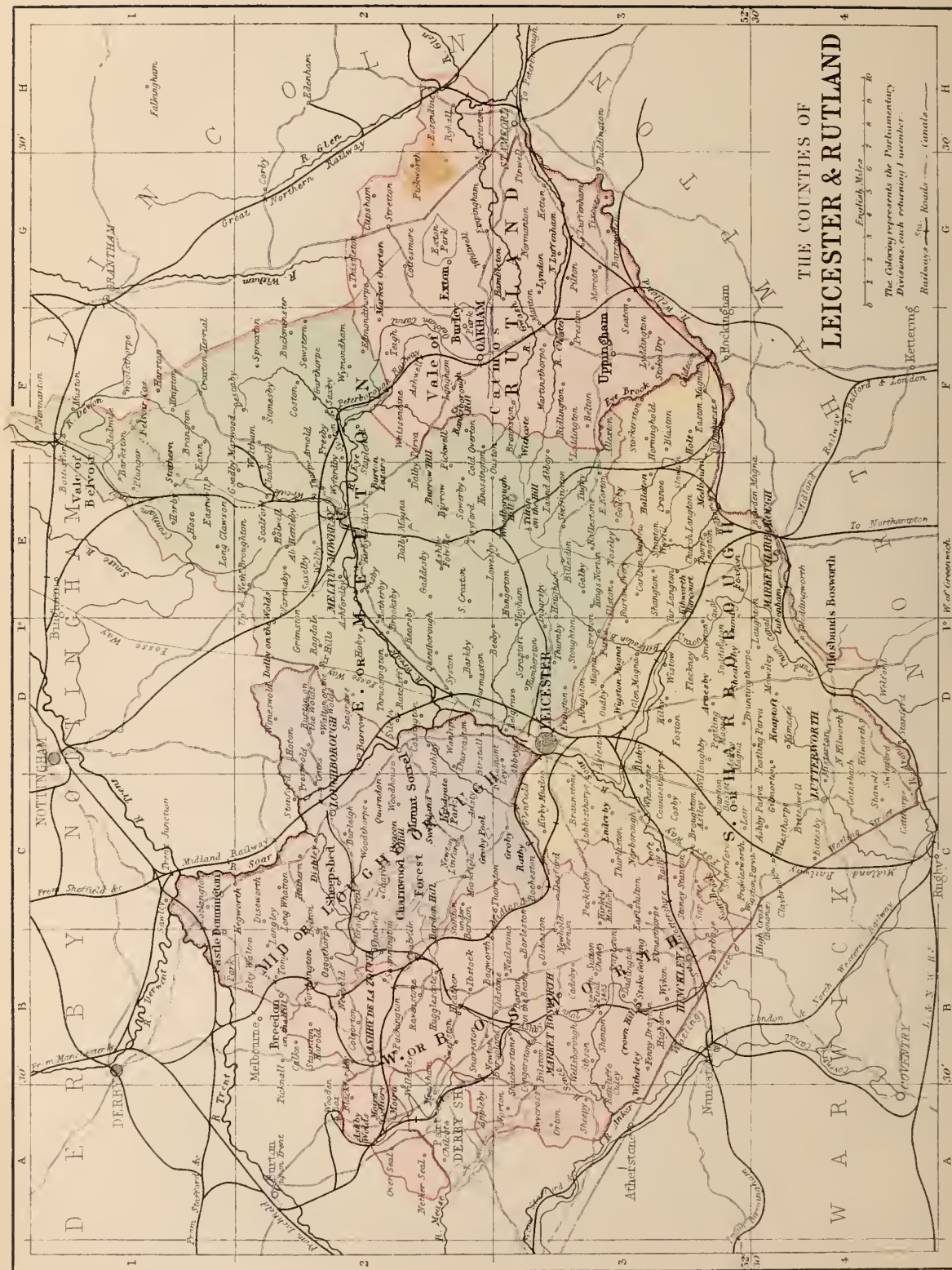
9/22/1921/52 2nd ed.



THE  
VERTEBRATE ANIMALS  
OF  
LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND.











THE  
VERTEBRATE ANIMALS

OF

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LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND.

BY

MONTAGU BROWNE, F.Z.S.,

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LEICESTER LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ETC.; AUTHOR OF 'PRACTICAL TAXIDERMY';  
ARTICLE "TAXIDERMY" ('ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA,' 9TH EDITION); 'EVIDENCES  
OF THE ANTIQUITY OF MAN IN LEICESTERSHIRE,' ETC., ETC.

*WITH FOUR PLATES AND A MAP.*

BIRMINGHAM AND LEICESTER:  
MIDLAND EDUCATIONAL COMPANY, LIMITED.

1889.









## PREFACE.

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UP to the present time, so far as I am aware, no complete work upon the Vertebrates of Leicestershire and Rutland has been attempted, although scattered notes have appeared in various Natural History journals, and a few lists—more or less imperfect—have from time to time been published. Thus, in 1840 MacGillivray, in his ‘British Birds,’ printed a “Catalogue of the Land Birds of the County of Leicester, by Mr. Jas. Harley.” In 1842 Potter published, in his ‘History and Antiquities of Charnwood Forest,’ an Appendix including the “Ornithology of Charnwood Forest, by Churchill Babington, Esq.” It is probable that this list was written, if not published, previously to that of Harley. Nothing further, I believe, was published for many years, until my friend Mr. Thomas Macaulay, M.R.C.S.L., contributed to ‘The Midland Naturalist’ for 1881-2 “A List of the Birds of Leicestershire,” to which I added a few notes. This list was, all things considered, the most complete then published. Since then a list, by Mr. F. T. Mott, of “The Mammals of Leicestershire,” appeared in ‘The Midland Naturalist’ for November, 1884. Following this came my notes in ‘The Zoologist’ for 1885-6-7, which the publishers of that periodical have kindly allowed me to reprint, and, being in possession of the whole of the MSS. (1840-55) of the late James Harley, and of many additional notes acquired during my nine years’ residence in Leicestershire, it was suggested

that a complete work upon the Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, and Fishes of Leicestershire and Rutland would be of service to the naturalists of both counties,—a suggestion which has led to the publication of this book.

With the exception of Natterer's Bat, which is original, the plates have been copied from that splendid work, 'History of the Birds of Europe,' by kind permission of my friend, Mr. H. E. Dresser, F.Z.S., etc., etc. I have also to record my indebtedness, in the compilation of my notes, to my good friends, the Rev. A. Matthews, M.A., of Gumley; Messrs. T. Macaulay, of Kibworth; H. S. Davenport, of Skeffington; W. Ingram, of Belvoir; the late R. Widdowson, of Melton Mowbray; to many members of the Ellis family and of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society (especially of "Section E") for Leicestershire notes, and for those of Rutland to the Right Honourable the Earl of Gainsborough, and to Mr. W. J. Horn, late of Uppingham and now of Peterborough.

The taxonomy of the Vertebrata in the following pages is that approved by the most modern authorities, my indebtedness to whom has been great, and will be found acknowledged throughout. The scheme in each class is from highest to lowest form.

Although, from causes explained in the text, I have had to eliminate many species—especially of birds—erroneously published in other lists, I have nevertheless been enabled to add many forms—both living and extinct—not hitherto recorded for the counties, the most notable being four Bats, one Vole, several fossil Mammalia, numerous Birds; amongst fossil Reptiles a paddle of an Ichthyosaurus exhibiting an appearance which is





almost unique (see pp. 177-8); and several fossil Fishes, one of which (see p. 203) is new to science, and another—a species of *Chondrosteus* (see pp. 197-8 and 203) is noteworthy as having never before been discovered in any part of the world except Lyme Regis; and it is indeed owing to the time expended upon such matters and to the correct determination of the various species, that I have to apologise to my subscribers for having delayed, for more than a year, the publication of this work. I hope, however, the contents will shew that the time has not been wasted.

It is probable, from the small number of copies (300 only) now issued, that a second edition may ultimately be called for. I would therefore ask Zoologists to favour me, from time to time, with any further information which they may consider of interest.

MONTAGU BROWNE. .

TOWN MUSEUM, LEICESTER,  
*August, 1889.*

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# THE VERTEBRATE ANIMALS

OF

## LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND.

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CLASS MAMMALIA.

SUB-CLASS *EUTHERIA* (*or MONODELPHIA*).

ORDER PRIMATES.

SUB-ORDER *ANTHROPOIDEA*.

FAMILY HOMINIDÆ.

MAN. *Homo sapiens*, Linnæus.

In a county like Leicestershire, which had for its capital, in Roman times, so important a city as *Rata*, founded probably upon the site of a Keltic settlement, the remains of Man should be fairly abundant; and, if we are content with those of the Early Historic Period, the relics of the Saxon, and especially of the Roman, are fairly abundant, as witness the varied collections of bones, arms, ornaments, and pottery in the Leicester Town Museum. When, however, we step over the threshold of the known into the unknown, the case is different, and few indeed are the remains of the people of the Coranied—known to the Romans as *Coitanni*, *Coritani*, or *Coritavi*,\* that powerful tribe holding, by conquest, those lands which now comprise Leicestershire, Rutland, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, and Lincolnshire, and whose camp—*Rath Coranied*—was in the vicinity of Leicester (some say at the *Rath* or “Raw-dykes”). Probably to this Late Keltic Period may be ascribed the few barrows still remaining, and some few articles now preserved in the Museum; whilst to an earlier Neolithic people may be ascribed most of the stone implements found in the

\* It is probable they were, before the Romans reached Leicester, subject to the still more powerful Brigantes—the original “Britons” or Kelts; and some authors hold that the Coritani, with another Keltic tribe, subsequently constituted the Iceni.

counties, and some of the cut Deer-antlers from the gravels and alluvia, a full report of all of which appeared in my article—"Evidences of the Antiquity of Man in Leicestershire,"—published, with three plates, in the 'Transactions of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society,' for October, 1888, pp. 7-37.

As yet, I have been unable to discover any implements of Palæolithic Man in the counties, although, misled by some doubtful specimens in the Museum, I was anxious to believe I had discovered other than accidental forms. It may be, however, that, owing to glacial phenomena which I have not space to discuss in these pages, Man did not inhabit our district in Mid, or Late, Pleistocene times; but, as we find remains of two Elephants, a Rhinoceros, and other Pleistocene mammals, I am still hoping against hope that, despite the fact of many of these being re-deposited, we may yet find implements of Palæolithic Man.

## ORDER CARNIVORA.

### SUB-ORDER *CARNIVORA VERA* (*or FISSIPEDIA*).

#### DIVISION *ÆLUROIDEA*.

#### FAMILY *FELIDÆ*.

##### WILD CAT. *Felis catus*, Linnæus.

Extinct within Historic times.—No authentic records are extant relative to the occurrence, in the counties, of the Wild Cat, which, without doubt, disappeared from the ancient forests and fastnesses about the same time as the Wolf and Wild Boar. Neither Mr. T. R. Potter, in his 'History and Antiquities of Charnwood Forest' (1842), nor the late Mr. James Harley, writing 1840-55, nor, indeed, any observer of note, mentions this animal. Large specimens of the Domestic Cat, which have taken to a wild life, have been often shot as game-destroyers in the various woods of the counties, and some have been forwarded to the Museum as the true *Felis catus*; but that the Wild Cat has occurred in either Leicestershire or Rutland for many hundreds of years is improbable, and there is no foundation whatever for the statement at p. 303 'Midland Naturalist,' 1884, that "there is a Wild Cat, which is now extremely rare, if not quite extinct in the county" (Leicestershire).

#### DIVISION *CYNOIDEA*.

#### FAMILY *CANIDÆ*.

##### WOLF. *Canis lupus*, Linnæus.

Extinct within Historic times.—Potter (p. 7) writes:—"Charnwood formed part of the ancient Celtic Forest of Arden, which extended from the Avon to





the Trent, and the Leicestershire portion was bounded on the east by a line running through High Cross to Barton, in Nottinghamshire. . . . Previous to the time of Edgar, the district was greatly infested with Wolves." Selden, in his notes to Drayton's 'Polyolbion' (ix. 76), refers to the Manor of Piddlesey, in Leicestershire, which was held by one Henry of Angage *per serjeantiam capiendi lupos*, and quotes as his authority 'Hist. Leicesters. 27 Hen. III. in Archiv. Turr. Lond.' For this last note I am indebted to Mr. J. E. Harting, F.L.S., F.Z.S. (see 'Extinct British Animals,' p. 142).

#### COMMON FOX. *Vulpes alopec* (Linnæus).

In such a Fox-hunting county as Leicestershire, it is needless to say, the Fox is resident and generally distributed.—Mr. H. S. Davenport, writing from Ashlands, Billesdon, says:—"We occasionally draw coverts blank, and find Foxes up great trees." Mr. S. Shackelford, of Husband's Bosworth, Rugby, writes as follows:—"In September, 1881, a friend and I were shooting over a large field of turnips in the parish of Saddington, accompanied by two beaters, a marker on Horseback, and a Spaniel Dog. On our first beat we put up three Foxes; my friend then said:—"It will be of little use walking over these turnips any longer, for we shall find no Birds, there being so many Foxes." I, however, persuaded him to try another beat; we did so, and found a good covey of Partridges, at which we had four barrels, my friend bringing down a brace, and I one Bird. My friend's second Bird dropped from eighty to a hundred yards in front of us, when to our great amazement the last Fox we had started deliberately turned round, met us, fetched the wounded Bird, and ran off with it over a brook on to the brow of a hill, where we watched it enjoying its repast, notwithstanding all our shouting and the mounted marksman galloping after it as far as the fence by the brook." The 'Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News' of 12th Nov., 1881, gave a full-page illustration of this occurrence, shewing one beater only, two *Pointers*, two guns, a mounted marker, and a Fox carrying off a Partridge in turnips; but no details were published, except that it was an actual occurrence, and that the Bird was a hen Pheasant!

The following incident, related by my friend Mr. Thos. Macaulay, M.R.C.S.L., of Kibworth, occurred on the farm of Mr. J. Perkins, at Laughton who vouches for the facts:—A labourer at work in a ploughed field saw a Fox come through the hedge with a Rabbit in his mouth; proceeding some distance into the field he laid the Rabbit down, and, scratching a hole, placed the Rabbit therein, covered it over, and then took his departure. So soon as the Fox was gone the man went to the place and took up the Rabbit. About an hour afterwards he saw two Foxes come into the field and go straight to the spot where he had seen the Rabbit buried. One of them began to search for the Rabbit, but not finding it, he cast round in



every direction, being joined in this operation by the other. After a few minutes had been thus spent in fruitless search, the two Foxes fell upon each other, and a fierce battle ensued until the spectator approached the combatants and separated them. Probably the first Fox had invited his friend to dine, and the latter, thinking himself the victim of a hoax, endeavoured to be revenged on his friend by thrashing him.

The late Mr. R. Widdowson, a well-known taxidermist of Melton Mowbray, wrote me in Feb. 1885:—"Did you ever hear of a Fox running away, carrying three large Fowls at once?" On enquiry, I found he had lately 'set up' a Fox shot in his neighbourhood whilst attempting to accomplish that feat.

At Noseley Hall there is a mounted "bob-tailed" Fox, about which Col. T. M. Hazlerigg writes me:—"The 'bob-tailed' vixen Fox was bobbed at Noseley as a cub; she generally lived and brought up her young in hollow trees, and gave Mr. Tailby's Hounds many a good run. After beating Hounds for nearly ten years, she was run to ground under the railway near Hallaton, by Sir Bache Cunard's Hounds. She killed the first Terrier sent in after her."

The 'Leicester Chronicle and Mercury' of 9th January, 1886, gives the following item from Kibworth:—"EXTRAORDINARY ENCOUNTER.—A remarkable instance of the tenacious rapacity of the long-tailed denizens of the woods has just occurred here. A few days ago, whilst Mr. Cunningham, of Kibworth Harcourt, was engaged in cutting hay on his stack, situated by the side of the highway between Kibworth and Tur Langton, he saw, running along the field on the opposite side of the road, what he took to be a Hare. His Dog immediately gave chase, and speedily overtook the animal. Mr. Cunningham, for the better observation of what was going on, hastened across to the field, and saw a large Fox pulling lustily at one end of something (he could not then distinguish what), and his Dog tugging as vigorously at the other. Curiosity prompting him to gain further knowledge, he ran towards the struggling couple, and soon perceived that the 'bone of contention' was well covered with meat; and to such a length of impudence did Reynard's voracity extend, that it was not until Mr. Cunningham attempted to bring his boot into contact with the varmint that he decided to relinquish his grip of the plunder. It then transpired that the booty which Pug had, with so much reluctance, abandoned, was part of a loin of mutton which (Pug's contamination excepted) was perfectly sweet. The tug-of-war revealed that, in pluck and strength, Fox and Dog were equally matched, and, without the interference of Mr. Cunningham, the issue of the struggle might long have been doubtful." Mr. W. H. Thompson, writing from Beckenham, Kent, informed me that, some years ago, on the estate of Mr. H. L. Powys-Keck at Stoughton, two vixen Foxes, with four cubs apiece, were known to inhabit the same earth. Mr. Powys-Keck, on being written to, confirmed this, saying







that the earth was in the "New Covert" at Bushby, and that the two sets of cubs were of different sizes, and were dug out and sent to the Master.

That the Fox and Badger will live on terms of amity one with the other is borne out by the late Mr. Alfred Ellis, who recorded this as occurring at "The Brand" for at least six years (see 'Zoologist,' 1880, pp. 5-9).

A singular incident occurred near Countesthorpe during the first week of April, 1888. A Spaniel belonging to Mr. Samuel Chapman had ten pups, which, not being well-bred, were all drowned, whereupon the disconsolate mother was missing for three days, and, upon search being made, was finally discovered about a quarter of a mile from home, in a Rabbit-burrow, contentedly suckling three Fox cubs, for the possession of which she must, undoubtedly, have done battle. Mr. Chapman being away from home, his wife imagined that the Dog again had pups, and two of the cubs were consequently drowned; the third, however, was shut up with its strange foster-mother in a barn close to the burrow, and, says Mrs. Chapman, "I went again at the close of the day to fetch her home, and no doubt the vixen Fox was searching for her cubs, as she passed close by me."

## DIVISION ARCTOIDEA.

### FAMILY MUSTELIDÆ.

PINE-MARTEN. *Mustela martes*, Linnæus.

"Marten-Cat."

Possibly extinct.—Harley wrote of this species (which he called "*Mustela foina*"\*):—"Annually becoming rare. Occurred a few years since in the woods at Gopsall. The writer had an opportunity afforded him some years since of examining a female and young of this species of *Mustela*, which had been captured on Earl Howe's estate, situate on the western side of the county. The occurrence of the Marten in any district around Leicester must be considered rare and unusual. Affects decayed and hollow trees, in which it brings forth its young. Preys much on young birds and small Mammalia." I can find no recent notices of its capture in Leicestershire; there is, however, an old specimen in the Museum, supposed to be from Wellsborough; and another specimen I had an opportunity of examining at Bradgate House is reported by Mr. H. A. Payne, of Enville, to have been killed at Bradgate about 1868, by Thomas Mennell. The late Mr. R. Widdowson wrote:—"When I first came to reside in Melton, I went over to Leicester several times, and used to call on a Mr. Pickard,

\* *M. foina*, of Linnæus, Gmelin, Erxleben, Jenyns, etc., etc., is, however, the Continental Beech-Marten, and, despite the records of the older British naturalists, has never occurred in Britain, but has been confused with the Pine-Marten, which was at one time considered the rarer animal. (See R. Alston, 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society,' 1879; also pp. 441-8, 'Zoologist,' 1879).

a hairdresser, who lived in the little lane leading out of the Market-place, just above the 'White Swan' Inn. He was a taxidermist also, and I well remember seeing some Martens which he had just stuffed, an adult female and two young ones, which, he told me, were killed a few miles away, I believe at Bradgate. He had the adult a long time, and used to exhibit it in his window, and was very fond of talking about it, declaring that it was brought to him alive. I also remember hearing that one was killed at Stapleford, but I did not see it, as it was years before I was employed by Lord Harborough."

Col. F. Palmer, of Withcote Hall, wrote me, in 1888 :—"We used many years ago, say fifty, to have the Marten Cat in Owston Wood."

COMMON POLECAT. *Putorius fœtidus* (auct.).

"Foumart," *i.e.*, Foul Mart or Marten, to distinguish it from the Pine-Marten, which was anciently called "Sweet Mart." "Fitchet."

Increasingly rare, and will soon become extinct.—Harley wrote :—"Commonly diffused over the county. Met with most frequently in the more densely wooded parts of it. Occurs not seldom in the vicinage of such woods as those of Oakley, Piper, Grace Dieu, and Gopsall."

The MS. Donation-book of the Museum records one presented, on 26th October, 1850, by Joseph Knight, Esq., of Aylestone, which Major Gregory Knight tells me was trapped at Blaby, by a gamekeeper in the employ of his late father. The late Mr. R. Widdowson wrote in 1885 :—"Not heard of any here for many years." Elkington, a bird-stuffer, told me, in 1885, that he had not received one for five-and-twenty years. Johnson, keeper at Laughton Lodge, wrote in 1885 :—"Not trapped a Polecat for years." Mr. Thomas Woodcock, of Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, wrote me, in 1885, that, although he had not seen one, he believed he had traced them in that vicinity in snowy weather. Mr. W. Ingram, of Belvoir, wrote, in 1885 :—"I cannot hear that a Polecat has been seen or destroyed of late years in our woods"; and John Ryder, Belvoir Castle, wrote in 1885 :—"I have not heard of any caught of late, but about twenty-five years ago, Jno. Gibson, one of the Duke's keepers, trapped one in the 'Frog Hollow,' near the pond. I saw and handled it; and a very fine one it was, much larger than any Ferret I have seen." Writing again on 1st July, 1885, he said :—"Two Polecats were trapped here three weeks ago. I did not hear of them in time to save them before they were spoilt, or should have sent them."

In September, 1885, I saw a specimen in the possession of Messrs. Warner, Sheppard and Wade, and was referred to Mr. W. Brooks, B.A., J.P., of Croft, who informed me that it was trapped in a Rabbit-warren on his estate about thirty years before, and was stuffed by T. Bull, his groom. Finding that the specimen was a desideratum, Mr. Sheppard kindly presented it to the Museum on 21st Oct., 1885.





I am indebted to Mr. W. H. Thompson, of Beckenham, Kent, for a note of one possessed by Mr. Thos. Rowe, of Evington, which the latter informs me was caught in a trap in Swadborough Spinney in the winter of 1856-7, and is still in his possession. Mr. H. C. Woodcock, of Rearsby, told me of five killed out of one drain at Brentingby by the keeper, in 1847, and shewed me three mounted specimens, which he believes to have formed part of this company. Col. F. Palmer wrote me, in 1888:—"We used many years ago, say fifty, to have the Polecat in Owston Wood."

IN RUTLAND.—The Right Honourable the Earl of Gainsborough informs me that one was shot at Exton about 1850. Mr. W. J. Horn, lately of "The Views," Uppingham, now of Peterborough, writes me (1888):—"One was killed on the farm of Mr. Wortley, at Ridlington, about thirty years ago," and Mr. G. H. Finch, M.P., of Burley-on-the-Hill, kindly informs me of one which his keeper, Charles Masters, caught there alive about 1881, but, unfortunately, did not have preserved when it died.

COMMON STOAT. *Putorius ermineus* (Linnæus).

"Ermine."

Resident and generally distributed, breeding close to the town of Leicester.—Harley recounted how he once saw, in the northern part of the county, a Stoat chase a Squirrel, the latter, with great agility, ascending some steps leading over the wall into a park, leaping from thence to a branch of an oak-tree, and thus escaping from its pursuer, which could follow it no farther than the top of the wall.

Mr. Macaulay described to me a most exciting chase which he witnessed, and which ended in a singular manner. I give it in his own words:—"On February 16th, 1884, I was driving from Stonton to Tur Langton, in company with Mr. Miles J. Walker, when our attention was attracted by the scream of a Rabbit, a sound which—like the cry of a Hare—is never heard except the animal is in fear. Looking into the adjoining field we saw a Rabbit being coursed by a Stoat. The Rabbit was screaming with terror all the while it ran, and the Stoat was rapidly gaining ground. After going about a hundred and fifty yards the Stoat was within a yard of the Rabbit, when the latter suddenly stopped and squatted, and at the same time ceased to scream. The Stoat stopped also, but, instead of attacking the Rabbit, squatted also in front of, and face to face with it about a foot off, and there they remained motionless, the Rabbit apparently paralysed with fear. The occupier of the farm, who happened to be on the road, went into the field, and on his approach the Stoat ran off, whilst the Rabbit allowed him to pick it up, and he brought it to us and placed it in my carriage. The animal's eyes were closed, the heart was palpitating most violently, and the breathing very rapid. It lay on its side for some minutes motionless, and I thought it would die.



A careful examination failed to detect any injury whatever. After a time it slowly recovered, and we turned it loose again." Several examples of the Stoat have occurred in the county, in partial "Ermine" or winter dress. I have not seen any purely white local specimens, but the Museum Donation-book records:—"Stoat in its winter dress, January 13th, 1851," and another, also "in winter dress, January 30th, 1851; both presented by Joseph Knight, Esq." Major Gregory Knight informs me that they were killed at Blaby by a gamekeeper in the employ of his late father. Mr. Thos. Woodcock, writing from Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake in 1885, said:—"One obtained near here pure white." Col. F. Palmer also has one or two in winter dress.

In RUTLAND.—Mr. Horn writes (1888):—"I saw several last year in partial winter dress in 'the gamekeeper's museum' in Wardley Wood—one completely white with the exception of a small brown patch on the cheek."

WEASEL. *Putorius vulgaris* (Gmelin).

"Cane."

Resident and generally distributed.—Harley remarked:—"This species hunts down the Grey Rat with wonderful daring and spirit. It also preys on the Water Rat, and traces out the runs of that quiet, harmless animal with much address and great cunning, surpassing even the adroitness and agility of the Ferret." One, presented by Mr. Thos. Greaves to the Leicester Museum on 14th Nov., 1851, was killed in Princess Street, close to the Museum.

During the early part of Dec., 1856, according to a MS. note dated 5th Dec., 1856, by Harley, who examined the specimen, a Weasel, pure white even to the extremity of the tail, was captured near Leicester. Bell, in his 'British Quadrupeds,' remarks on the rarity of such variation in the Weasel, and Harley states that the white specimen above noticed is the only one of the kind he ever met with. It might be supposed that Harley had possibly mistaken a small Stoat for a Weasel, but he added:—"The Stoat—its congener—becomes white in the dreary season of the winter, throughout, save the tip of its tail, the hair of which generally remains black. The change of dress and the variegated exterior of the Weasel is certainly of less common occurrence, if not very rare." I purchased from Ludlam, a bird-stuffer, a purely white specimen said by him to have been killed at Tooley Park, Earl Shilton, in Aug., 1870, by a Mr. Jacques. I cannot, however, get confirmation of this, so give the note for what it is worth. One—a male—was killed by a Dog, at a rick at Aylestone Mill, on 2nd Oct., 1885, and was purchased for the Museum on account of a slight variation, the upper surface of the left front paw being white. Mr. W. Whitaker, of Wistow, wrote me, in Jan., 1886, of a light-yellow variety killed by a Cat at Market Bosworth, and in the hands of the bird-stuffer there, to whom I wrote for details, only, unfortunately, to find him dead.







COMMON BADGER. *Meles taxus* (Boddaert).

“Brock.”

Resident and generally distributed; apparently more common than formerly, for, writing of this animal, 1840-50, Harley appears to have found it rare. He wrote:—“Formerly well distributed over the county, abounding in most large woods, especially those verging on the Forest of Charnwood. The woods of Gopsall and Oakley also bore marks of its retreat, even till within a very recent date. Used also to occur at Mere Hill Wood, near Loughborough. Not common.” His opinion as to its scarcity is shared in up to the present by most observers, but probably the animal is more common than generally supposed, owing to its retiring, nocturnal habits. The Museum possessed two specimens marked “Leicestershire,” presumably those recorded in the Donation-book, one as having been presented by Sir A. S. Hazlerigg, Bart., on 22nd Aug., 1849, and the other shot at Keythorpe Hall, and presented by Lord Berners on 2nd April, 1860. The Rev. Andrew Matthews, M.A., Rector of Gumley, forwarded a half-grown living specimen—a male—to the Museum on 28th June, 1884. It was taken alive by a farm servant in the parish, who found it asleep, and cleverly contrived to get its neck between the prongs of a fork, pinning it to the ground whilst he tied its legs together, when he carried it home in triumph. This incident was mentioned in the ‘Zoologist’ for 1884, p. 271. Mr. H. S. Davenport wrote, in 1885:—“Badgers are bred in Owston Wood; Ram’s Head, at Keythorpe; and Sir F. Fowke’s spinneys at Tilton-on-the-Hill, most years.” The late Mr. R. Widdowson wrote, in 1885:—“A great many instances of Badgers being killed within a few miles of us within the last year or two: have had two from Hoby. A friend residing at Eaton, near Waltham-on-the-Wolds, had, about four months ago, three within a week; two were young.” Mr. W. Ingram, writing in 1885, says:—“Badgers breed in our woods, but are rarely found away from their earths. I have known of but two instances of Badgers being found above ground by the Foxhounds and killed. Keepers tell me that they occasionally see a family of Badgers returning to their lair, trotting in a line behind a leader just before daybreak.”

Mr. Jno. Hunt informed me, in 1885, that Badgers formerly bred, or were found, at Scraftoft, and Mr. J. A. Gill afterwards corroborated this by telling me that, twenty or more years ago, Badgers bred in the “Hall Gardens,” Scraftoft, and that he remembered two being caught one moonlight night by men posted in yew-trees over their burrows. The Badgers having been watched out, their holes were “bagged,” the animals being afterwards driven out of the adjacent spinneys into these traps.

Col. F. Palmer writes me that there is generally one laid up in Owston Wood, or in the plantation near Launde, and that a young one, dug out about 1886, is now mounted, and in his possession. A male Badger was presented to the Museum on 18th June, 1886, by Mr. C. E. Bassett, of Ullesthorpe, who wrote me:—“The

Badger was captured in a dry brick culvert on Whit-Thursday ; it had been lying in a sand-pit for some time, and finding it had moved, we tried to draw it with Terriers, but, although they faced it well, it repeatedly drove them out. It was shot at last whilst passing by a hole in the top. The female and, I believe, young ones are still about."

The 'Leicester Journal,' dated 22nd April, 1887, contained the following :—  
 "BADGER HUNTING.—As two men, named Church, and a third named Vernon, were working in Marston township, they discovered a Badger under an old tree root. He was captured and taken to Stanton, where he was purchased by Dr. Turner ; and that gentleman, thinking it a good opportunity to improve the occasion on behalf of the Church Restoration Fund, made a charge of 1*d.* each to see the animal, and thus realized over £1 5*s.* The Badger has been hunted several times during the past week by a number of Beagles belonging to Dr. Turner and others, and has afforded some capital sport. The animal is being fed with flesh meat, which it devours greedily, and is in good condition."

Jelley, then bailiff to Rev. F. Buttanshaw, informed me that a large male was killed at Gumley, on 15th Sept., 1887.

Mr. Geoffrey Ellis informed me of one taken at "The Brand," near Leicester, at the end of March, 1887, and the Badgers of this estate are alluded to in a most interesting article written by Mr. Harting, in the 'Zoologist,' 1888 (pp. 5-9) ; but, as these were introduced from Gloucestershire, details need not be given, except that the late Mr. Alfred Ellis wrote, in the 'Times' of 4th Oct., 1877, that for many years a vixen Fox brought up her cubs in the same earth with the Badgers, and that the old and young of both families lived happily together.

Mr. H. L. Powys-Keck, of Stoughton Grange, informs me (1888) that Badgers have been caught *twice* in Swadborough Spinney, on his estate, but not of late years.

Mr. Macaulay told me he was sure they bred, or were found, at the Laughton Hills, and his assertion was afterwards proved correct by Johnson, the keeper, sending me, on 30th August, 1885, a very fine female, which I purchased for the Museum. Soon after this I saw, in the sale rooms of Messrs. Warner, Sheppard, and Wade, a stuffed Badger in a case, on the back of which was inscribed :—"This Badger caught at Laughton, 1849. Jno. Moxon." Since then I have purchased for the Museum a male Badger, weighing nearly 24½ lbs., which was killed in Mr. J. Perkin's plantation at Laughton Hills, Rugby, 9th May, 1887, and three female specimens, also killed at Laughton, on 27th and 28th June, 1887, and 23rd May, 1888, respectively, the first of these being much younger than the others.

In RUTLAND.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it breeds annually in Exton Park. Mr. Horn writes me that one or two were dug out, in 1886, from an earth at Wardley, and that, in 1887, one was shot in the meadows near Gretton Mill ; and Mr. Finch wrote, in 1888 :—"There are some now in Burley Woods."





COMMON OTTER. *Lutra vulgaris*, Erxleben.

Resident, but rare.—Harley recorded that, in his day, it was occasionally found on the banks of the rivers Soar, Trent, and Wreake. He was present at the capture of a female Otter and four young ones, in the spring of 1817. The young Otters were taken from a rude lair, matted with rushes and flags which the dam had carefully conveyed through a hole, and concealed within a decayed pollard willow on the banks of the river Soar, near to the upper mills in the parish of Loughborough. On being surprised the old Otter fought the Dogs furiously, and was with difficulty overcome. The young, which had attained to the size of a large Water-Rat, were still blind.

"J. B.," writing in the 'Leicester Chronicle and Mercury,' 28th Feb., 1885, says:—"Between sixty and seventy years back, Squire Smith, of Enderby, kept a pack of Otter-Hounds.—A large Otter, stuffed and in a case, has been at the 'Narborough Inn' for many years past. The late Mr. Wm. Sansome was gamekeeper, and, I believe, shot it." In 1885 I called at the "Narborough Inn," when the late Miss Sansome kindly shewed me the above-mentioned specimen, large, but wretchedly mounted; it was shot between fifty and sixty years before. The Museum formerly possessed one killed near Enderby, on 28th Sept., 1849. Mr. Thomas Woodcock, of Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, wrote me, in 1885, that, some fifty years previously, the then Rector of that place kept a pack of Otter-Hounds. Mr. N. C. Curzon, of Lockington Hall, writes me:—"A large female Otter was killed here in October, 1877."

Loughborough seems to have kept up its breed of Otters since Harley's time; for, seeing a notice in the local papers as to the shooting by the water Keeper of two young Otters in the river Soar, near the "Big Meadow," Loughborough, one evening in March, 1884, I sent a telegram on the 22nd to Mr. Dakin, a fishmonger of that town, hoping to get the specimens for the Museum, and received a reply:—"Two were killed, but only one obtained. There are more about." The late Mr. R. Widdowson, writing on 6th Feb., 1885, said:—"I heard last week of one being seen at Brentingby; I had one some years ago from the same locality."

A local paper relates that, on 17th Oct., 1885, the Hounds were put in at a little covert called "Burbidge," on the banks of the Eye. "One Fox was chopped within the cover, and a fellow-lodger of another ilk, a fine Otter, also fell a victim to Gillard's beauties. The assertion that 'Otters have been seen between Bishop's Mill and the New Cover' has been pooh-poohed. One is killed at any rate. The Miller of the Eye is sure there are more about, for not a single Eel has come down during the recent flush."

Mr. H. Smith, of Burton Street, Melton Mowbray—the miller alluded to—wrote me, Nov., 1885:—"There are a good many Otters in this neighbourhood, both above and below Bishop's Mill."

Mr. Macaulay sends me a note given by Rev. H. Parry, of Tugby



Vicarage, of a fine dog Otter, killed 19th Dec., 1888, between Loddington Redditch and "Tugby Bushes," in the Eye Brook, a little stream which rises at Tilton and runs into the Welland at Easton Magna, the place where it was killed being at least twelve miles from the Welland. It was  $22\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. in weight, and measured 4 ft. 1 in. from nose to tip of tail, the latter being 17 inches in length, and 8 in circumference at base.

In RUTLAND.—Mr. Horn informs me that they occasionally occur, and that, in January, 1888, one was seen in the Welland, about a mile above Gretton Mill. According to Mr. Finch, one, or more, has also been seen in Burley Ponds.

FOSSIL CARNIVORA.—It is somewhat singular that no remains of this Order should have, as yet, been discovered in Leicestershire. Taking into consideration the fact of the occurrence in the county of several Ungulates contemporaneous with such Carnivora as *Ursus spelæus*, *Felis spelæus*, etc., it is really extraordinary that no vestiges of the latter Order have been discovered. Writing to Mr. H. E. Quilter, a well-known Leicestershire geologist, upon this subject, I received the following reply:—"I have thought over the question as to remains of Carnivora in our post-tertiary deposits, and, although I have seen a good many remains of other orders, have never recognized any as belonging to the Carnivora. They are not mentioned, I find, in Ansted's 'Geology of Leicestershire,' in J. W. Judd's 'Geological Survey and Memoir of the County,' nor in Harrison's 'Geology.' This seems strange, as they are found in post-tertiaries near Stamford and Peterborough: *Hyæna* in a cave near Stamford, *Hyæna spelæa* and *Canis lupus* in estuarine gravels near Peterborough. Possibly other conditions prevailed which prevented their living hereabout; or, it may be, we have not representatives of the beds in which their remains (Carnivora) are found in neighbouring localities."

## ORDER INSECTIVORA.

### SUB-ORDER INSECTIVORA VERA.

#### FAMILY TALPIDÆ.

COMMON MOLE. *Talpa europæa*, Linnæus.

Resident and common.—Harley was informed by a man who had been a professional Mole-catcher for more than sixty years, that he had never seen a Mole alive in a state of freedom. No doubt it is seldom seen above ground, though Mr. Macaulay tells me that, about 1881 or '82, he observed one whilst driving between Mowsley and Saddington, and succeeded in catching it before it had time to bury itself.







Harley wrote:—"Buff and white, or parti-coloured individuals occasionally occur," although a Mole-catcher of more than fifty years' experience once told him that he had never met with any such varieties. One in the Museum is labelled 'From Belvoir. Mr. Jno. Ryder.' This specimen I find noted in the old MS. Donation-book as being presented on 25th April, 1862. It is of a uniform cream-colour, inclining to ferruginous on the limbs. The Rev. A. Matthews, of Gunley, shewed me one precisely similar, caught by a Mole-catcher in an adjoining parish during the first week of June, 1884, the man stating at the time that he had met with several other examples during the course of his trapping. This specimen was recorded in the 'Zoologist' for 1884, page 271. Curiously enough, Mr. Matthews procured another on 20th March, 1885, which had been caught in a trap at Laughton Hills. He describes it as being the handsomest he ever saw, a large male of an amber colour, with the nose white nearly to the eyes, cheeks and back of the head and neck bright orange. Mr. Ingram sent one to the Museum, caught in Barkstone Wood, Belvoir, on 10th June, 1887, and precisely similar to the one sent from the same locality twenty-five years previously. I saw, in the hands of Pinchen, the taxidermist of Churchgate, Leicester, a similar variety taken at Ansty in December, 1887; and Mr. John Burgess, of Saddington, presented to the Museum a very fine one which was caught there on 10th March, 1888. This specimen is also like the others, but rather more reddish-orange on its ventral aspect. It would thus appear that there is a constant variety of the Mole, in which part of the head and the joints of the limbs are ferruginous, and the remainder of the body cream-coloured.

## FAMILY SORICIDÆ.

COMMON SHREW. *Sorex vulgaris*, Linnæus.

Resident and generally distributed.—Harley remarked upon the great numbers found dead every autumn, in pathways near farms and outbuildings—a fact well known, but which has not yet, I believe, been satisfactorily explained.

Mr. W. Whitaker, Wistow Grange, wrote me in September, 1885:—"A man named Storer has a white Shrew, killed at Market Bosworth."

LESSER SHREW. *Sorex minutus*, Linnæus.

Although I have never met with this species, it probably occurs in the counties, and, as it may be so easily confounded with the Common Shrew, the following distinguishing characteristic, from Bell's 'British Quadrupeds,'—which Mr. Oldfield Thomas, F.Z.S., of the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, tells me is to be relied upon—may prove of service:—In this species the fifth pointed tooth in upper jaw is in the same line as the preceding ones, and is distinctly visible externally. In the commoner species, on

the contrary, the same tooth is extremely small, and is out of the line of the others, so as to be almost entirely invisible from the outside.

**WATER-SHREW.** *Crossopus fodiens* (Pallas).

Harley wrote:—"Not common. Occasionally met with on the banks of water-courses and drains in the meadow-lands near Loughboro'." The late Mr. Widdowson wrote, in Feb. 1885:—"I know one locality they frequented a few years ago—namely, Sysonby, about a mile from Melton." Mr. F. Bates told me, in 1885, that he had found them some years before, at Narborough. Mr. J. S. Ellis told me, in 1885, that, some five-and-twenty years previously, when he lived at Glenfield Lodge, he remembered one day seeing a Water-Shrew swimming and diving in a small pond, endeavouring to capture a Frog, but, although successful in bringing it to the bank half a dozen times, was unable to drag it out. Mr. W. H. Thompson writes me that he has noticed the Water-Shrew in a brook which runs past Stoughton Grange, close to Leicester. He appears to know the animal well, as he says:—"It had its habitat in a small hole in the bank. They were called Water Mice by us."

**FAMILY ERINACEIDÆ.**

**COMMON HEDGEHOG.** *Erinaceus europæus*, Linnæus.

Resident and generally distributed.—I have received several from Knighton, close to the town of Leicester, where it breeds. On the 13th September, 1883, an old female Hedgehog and four young ones were brought to me from thence. Another, caught also at Knighton, we endeavoured to keep. It remained for some time in the work-room at the Museum, hiding itself during the day under the box of a step leading from one room into another. Our porter, who was very kind to it, tells me that he saw it several times away from its retreat, but that it was not at all tame, although he constantly fed it with bread and milk. One day it came out while several of us were there, and the next day it ran around our feet squeaking and trying to nibble at our boots. It would not, however, eat bread and milk, so we procured meat, liver, apples, potatoes, carrots, anything we could think of, but it refused everything, though apparently very hungry. The next morning it was dead.

**ORDER CHIROPTERA.**

**SUB-ORDER MICRO-CHIROPTERA.**

**FAMILY VESPERTILIONIDÆ.**

**BARBASTELLE.** *Synotis barbastellus* (Schreber).

Rare.—The Rev. A. Matthews shewed me a specimen which I recognised as this curious little Bat, procured at Gumley about 1876.





LONG-EARED BAT. *Plecotus auritus* (Linnæus).

"Horned Bat."

Resident, but unevenly distributed.—Harley wrote:—"Widely diffused over the county. Partly gregarious. Plentifully found in Bradgate Park, where, no doubt, it finds shelter by day in the pollard oaks, ruins, crannies of rocks, and holes which abound there. Breeds in the county." Mr. W. A. Vice, M.B., presented to the Museum a stuffed specimen, procured by him at Blaby Mill about 1883, and another—a living specimen—obtained at the same place on 13th July, 1885. I saw two in the hands of Turner, a bird-stuffer, one of which was caught behind a shutter at Barkby some time in 1884, and the other at Hinckley in September, 1885, the latter specimen being like the one described by Jenyns (see Bell, 2nd edition, pp. 79-80). John Ryder sent me a young male, from Belvoir, on 20th March, 1886. Mr. Macaulay sent me three, obtained from the belfry of Kibworth Church, on 5th June, 1887, and another on 2nd June, 1888. Mrs. Biddle sent me one, found behind a shutter at Sutton-in-the-Elms on 26th May, 1888, and I received a living specimen from Carlton Curlieu Hall, Nov., 1888.

WHISKERED BAT. *Vespertilio mystacinus* (Leisler).

After considerable search, extending over many years, aided also by a large number of observers, and getting a great many *Pipistrelles*, this rare little Bat has, as I predicted, been found in the county, through the exertions of Mr. G. Kirby, of Lubenham Lodge, who kindly forwarded to the Museum a nice young male specimen, taken in his garden on 17th Sept., 1888.

DAUBENTON'S BAT. *Vespertilio daubentonii* (Leisler).

Rare.—An adult female of this species ( $9\frac{3}{4}$  inches in expanse of wings) was brought to me, whilst still alive, on 19th June, 1885, having been shot with a catapult on the evening of the 17th, whilst flying over water at Aylestone, by Master George Snoad, who kindly presented it to the Museum.

NATTERER'S BAT. *Vespertilio nattereri* (Kuhl).

"Reddish-grey Bat."

Rare.—I was first enabled to add this species, which is rather rare in Britain, from having determined a specimen which I saw in the possession of the Rev. A. Matthews, who informed me that it was caught in his house at Gumley many years ago—he cannot recall the exact date. Since then, Clarke, the sexton at Aylestone Church, brought me a specimen which he found dead in the church on 31st July, 1887, and which was the first ever acquired by the Museum.

Being quite sure there were more of them in the church, I purchased a "Bat-fowling" net, and went up on the evening of 12th August, 1887. There



were numbers of Bats flying inside and outside the church; but, choosing the inside, I stationed myself by one of the windows of the chancel, between which and a stove-pipe the Bats were flitting. After two hours' work, and several misses, I managed to catch three Pipistrelles, and, much to my joy, one Natterer's Bat. The flight of the two species varied much, the Pipistrelles flying quicker, and constantly changing the direction of their flight in a zigzag kind of manner, whereas the flight of Natterer's Bat was more fully sustained, and much more direct, though somewhat slower. A marked difference between the flight of the two species was, not so much the greater spread of wing, as the evident *breadth* of the wing-membrane. Most noticeable, however, was the greyish-white tint of the under part of the body; and this was readily observed, not only when flying in the light of the lamps, but when the animal was high up, or in the darkest parts of the church—so much so, indeed, that the people who were assisting constantly exclaimed "Here comes a *white-waistcoated* one."

The specimen, which was a male, was very amiable in captivity, and we fed him two or three times with pieces of raw meat soaked in water, which he greedily seized when hungry, making, however, very little progress, a small piece the size of a barley-corn lasting him a quarter of an hour. He took flesh from the fingers, and lapped water from a spoon in the most comical way imaginable. He was infested with a small, long, light-coloured flea, which he dislodged by scratching himself like a Dog, often bringing his foot over from the back to scratch his head. At first he was very lively, and we indulged him with several flights around the room. When running on the floor of his cage, he kept his head and breast very erect, and ran along rapidly, assisting himself by strokes of the closed wing-membranes, the carpal-joints being brought to the ground alternately. His favourite position in repose was head downwards, the body disposed as shewn by the illustration. He did not care to suspend himself from sticks or strings fixed across his cage, but had a passion for suspending himself, by his little claws, from the meshes of muslin or wire netting which covered the air-holes of his temporary prison. Cold weather supervening, he became very sluggish, and finally died after nine days, in spite of all care, refusing all the delicacies (including flies, which he never appeared to eat) with which we tried to tempt him. When alive, I made several sketches from him, four of which, not quite life-size, I have reproduced here: viz., one shewing the animal in repose, clinging to the top of his cage; another shewing the head in normal attitude, when alert; the third representing the same when alarmed or threatening, at which time he uttered his little sibilant squeak, threw the tragus forward, and erected his fur; the last shews the inter-femoral membrane—the margin of which is armed with very stiff, light-golden hairs—and part of the foot, with the attachment of the membranes. Description and measurements are:—colour above, warm grey with a golden glance, grey at the roots; underneath, silvery-grey, blackish-grey at the roots;









HEAD IN NORMAL ATTITUDE.



IN REPOSE.



HEAD IN THREATENING ATTITUDE.



INTER-FEMORAL MEMBRANE SHEWING CILIATED MARGIN.

Montagu Browne, del et lith. ad viv.

# NATTERER'S BAT

## *VESPERTILIO NATTERERI* (KUHLE).



wing-membranes dusky; ears dusky, tragus lighter; muzzle and under-jaws light flesh-colour. Lines in inter-femoral membrane—which, as before stated, is ciliated—eight (Bell says nine). Foot not free. Weight 90 grains. Length from nose to end of body 1·8 inches; tail 1·3; exerted portion of tail 0·1; from eye to nose 0·3; ear 0·7; tragus 0·45; arm (excluding humerus) 1·5; wing-membrane (excluding humerus), 3·9; extreme depth of wing, from insertion of thumb 2·0; extreme width across both wings 10·0; foot, with claw, 0·3; thumb, with claw, 0·25.

PIPISTRELLE. *Vesperugo pipistrellus* (Schreber).

“Common Bat,” “Flitter-Mouse,” “Hat Bat.”

Resident and commonly distributed.—Harley noticed that this species is often observed on the wing during the day, and remarked that in this it differs from the “Great Bat.” I received twelve from Belvoir on 13th July, 1885, and have procured several at Aylestone, Kibworth, Broughton Astley, and various parts of both counties, this species appearing, indeed, to be, *par excellence*, the “Common” Bat. Its strange name of “Hat” Bat, which I have heard commonly applied, appears to be founded upon the childish rhyming invitation to come under the would-be captor’s hat, and be feasted upon bacon!

NOCTULE. *Vesperugo noctula* (Schreber).

“Great Bat,” High-flier,” “Rat Bat.”

Resident and generally distributed.—Harley remarked that this species appears to be most common in the vicinity of the town of Leicester, and is most often observed on still summer evenings. The Rev. A. Matthews told me in March, 1885, that one broiling hot day in July, some years before, at mid-day, when the air was perfectly bright and clear, he observed Swallows circling at an immense altitude, and above them, at a much higher elevation, four large Bats, which he supposed to be of this species.\* No doubt this is the species (the Noctule) about which the late Mr. Widdowson wrote me, on 12th February, 1885, under the heading of “Red Horse-shoe Bat” †:—“We were cleaning up the church, and at the end of a beam there was a hole where it went into the wall. I could smell the Bats within (very warm and acid); I put my arm in, then called the men for a cement-tub which stood near, and brought them out by handfuls, I should think thirty or more, and not one of them bit me. Being very busy, and not being much up in Bats, only knowing three or four at that time, I let them go; but on describing them to a gentleman some time after, he said they were rare. They were of a ruddy-brown colour, nearly as big again as a

\* Although Gilbert White named this Bat *alticolans*, from this very habit of feeding high in the air (see Letter 36 to Pennant), yet his remarks did not apply to its doing this before the evening, and the observations of Rev. A. Matthews are, I believe, unparalleled in the history of this species.

† *Rhinolophus ferrum-equinum* has—so far as I am aware—not yet occurred in the county.

Short-tailed Grass-Vole; he called them the 'Red Horse-shoe Bat.' I did not notice the nose." One in the Museum, a young male, was shot at "New Parks," on 14th July, 1884, by Mr. W. A. Evans; and on 2nd July, 1885, I received four specimens from Belvoir. I have observed it once or twice each summer since 1880, but in 1884 so many were flying near the Aylestone Mill one evening at the end of June that I brought out my little .410 walking-stick gun, and in a few minutes killed several, one of which (a male) measured nearly fourteen inches in extent of wings. During the fine weather between the 17th and 23rd of April, 1885, several were observed in the evening, and on the 21st I shot a young male at Aylestone. On the 11th June, 1885, three were flying above the road by the Aylestone Mill, two of which (both males) I shot. One measured  $14\frac{3}{4}$  inches in expanse of wing. Three more were observed the next evening, of which I shot two—a male and female, now in the Museum.

On 8th July, 1885, I shot, flying over the canal by "S. Mary's Mills," Aylestone, one which fell into the water. Being dark at the time I could not see it, but my Dog fortunately retrieved it, for on examination I found it to be a female containing a naked fœtus. I have seen it so late as October, but on the 1st November, 1886, a fine specimen was brought to me, which some men had shot by the canal at Aylestone, this being a very late date for its appearance, only paralleled, I believe, by Mr. Harting's date (see 'Zoologist,' 1887, p. 169).

In June (I think on the 15th), 1887, I shot a male and female by the mill at Aylestone. The latter specimen appearing gravid, I carefully opened it, and discovered two well-developed but naked fœtus. I cannot find in any notice of this species that it is credited with having more than one young at a birth.

It will be observed that, of the fifteen species of Bats which are—some of them on imperfect evidence, I think—said to have been found in Britain, seven have, so far, been noted in Leicestershire; here, then, is a field for investigation open to county naturalists, and I would therefore ask them to kindly forward all unknown Bats to me for identification, and the specimens so forwarded shall be returned if desired.

The Hairy-armed Bat, *V. leisleri* (Kuhl), which is exceedingly like the present species, will probably yet be found, and all Noctules should be carefully examined.

## ORDER RODENTIA.

### SUB-ORDER DUPLICIDENTATA.

#### FAMILY LEPORIDÆ.

#### COMMON HARE. *Lepus europæus* (Pallas).

Resident, and commonly distributed.—Some winters ago (I forget the exact date) the local papers recorded the fact of a Hare running through the principal







streets of the town of Leicester, and being ultimately caught in Lancaster Street; and the 'Leicester Daily Post' of 12th October, 1886, contained the following :—  
“ A SINGULAR VISITOR.—About five o'clock on Saturday morning, a Hare was seen leisurely trotting along Belvoir Street. At that early hour but few people were about, but the few who were in the street were soon in hot pursuit. In the uncertain light of early dawn, however, Puss managed to elude her pursuers, and made good her escape, much to the chagrin of those who were seeking her destruction. How the Hare came into the street seems somewhat a mystery; but it is supposed that it ran into the town with a flock of Sheep that were being driven to market, and becoming bewildered, turned into Belvoir Street.”

COMMON RABBIT. *Lepus cuniculus*, Linnæus.

Resident and common.—Introduced by some means into the Abbey Park, Leicester, these pests became so numerous in 1887, that it was necessary to exterminate them, and hence resulted the novel spectacle of small shooting parties in the heart of Leicester; and as, through the existence of brushwood and the presence of on-lookers—chiefly street Arabs—the Rabbits were not very easy to hit, the unsuccessful shots were considerably cheered and refreshed by the running fire of criticisms indulged in by the spectators.

Malformations and varieties constantly occur, and the Museum Donation-book records the presentation, on 18th Oct., 1851, by J. Knight, Esq., of Aylestone, of the head of a wild Rabbit killed at Blaby, shewing a remarkable development of the incisors. Harley mentioned that in Bradgate Park, where it abounds, “black and parti-coloured varieties are met with.” I received a white one in the autumn of 1881 from thence, and in the spring of 1884 I saw a black one run out from a little spinney at Knighton, on land farmed by Mr. Lander. On 17th April, 1885, I was with Mr. John Hunt, at Thurnby, on land in his possession, and, amongst a great number of Rabbits which were feeding out, we saw several white and parti-coloured ones, no less than five being seen at one time. Of course, at our approach they bolted into their burrows amongst thick scrub; but, by keeping perfectly still, we were enabled to get a near view of those which, deceived by our quietude, shortly re-emerged. So near were they, that we were able to see that two or three had sandy patches on their ears and other parts of their bodies, whilst others were pure white. A fact which struck us as singular was, that these white Rabbits should retain their snowy appearance after scampering through wet grass, muddy places, and up and down their burrows. Being in close proximity to dwelling-houses, it is, of course, possible, nay probable, that these varieties may have been produced by crossing with tame ones.

SUB-ORDER *SIMPLICIDENTATA*.

## FAMILY MURIDÆ.

BLACK RAT. *Mus rattus*, Linnæus.

Not mentioned by Potter, and probably long extinct in the counties, despite the assertion (see 'Mid. Nat.,' 1884, p. 302) of its having been "*seen* \* in some old Leicester cellars within the last twenty years." Rev. Andrew Matthews, who has resided thirty-four years in Leicestershire, has never heard of its occurrence, and the late Mr. Widdowson and Mr. Ingram, writing in February, 1885, were likewise agreed as to its extinction in this county. Indeed, any one acquainted with the history of the Black Rat must know how unlikely it is to occur, except in ancient seaports. Unfortunately, however, by a gross error, a specimen has been recorded as occurring in Leicestershire (see 'Transactions of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society,' January, 1887, p. 39, and also my notes upon the following species). Harley—whom I hasten to quote *in extenso*, that my readers may judge of the style, now happily departed, with which he embellished his remarks—wrote:—"Were I certain of the actual indigeneity of the Black Rat, this would be the place to chronicle it; but as I am in the possession of no data to prove its identity with the present existing fauna, I omit it very carefully altogether. The species, originally, no doubt, did belong to the fauna of the County, but as the private records of none of my friends, as for instance, Squire, Retainer, Vassal, Serf, Woodsman, Ranger, etc., etc., contain no account of the creature, I have thought it prudent, as I have said, to omit its name altogether in the present list of animals." The reader may now judiciously insert as many notes of admiration as the matter deserves.

BROWN RAT. *Mus decumanus* (Pallas).

"Common Rat."

Its distribution in the county is unfortunately too general.—A specimen presented to the Museum on 9th April, 1852, by Police Constable Thomas Smith, measured nineteen inches from the nose to the tip of the tail.

Varieties occasionally occur. Mr. H. A. Payne informs me that a *very* light cream-coloured Rat was killed in Martinshaw Wood, in 1876, and is now in Lady Stamford's possession. Mr. A. Paget presented to the Museum a white example, which was captured in his garden in West Street, on 6th Nov., 1886. The specimen is a female, and its measurements (in the flesh) were:—Extreme length, inclusive of tail,  $13\frac{1}{2}$  in.; length of tail (measured underneath)  $6\frac{3}{8}$  in.; length of ear  $\frac{7}{16}$  in., being  $\frac{2}{16}$  in. shorter than that of the Black Rat. Varieties such as this must not, however, be confounded with the

\* The italics are mine.





“White Rats” so often kept as pets, these, singularly enough—so Mr. Oldfield Thomas tells me,—being albinos of the Black Rat; and, relative to the latter species, I regret exceedingly that, in the ‘Transactions of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society,’ January, 1887, p. 39, Mr. F. T. Mott has allowed himself to record a rather interesting, young, dark variety of the Common Rat, caught at “New Parks,” in the early part of 1886, and which he exhibited to Section “D” of the Society, on 15th Sept., 1886, as a *bonâ-fide* example of *Mus rattus*. The specimen, which, by the kindness of the owner, C. Adcock, I have been enabled to examine, is dark brown above and light brown underneath, and, except in size of body, bears not the *slightest* resemblance to the Black Rat, the length of the ears being  $\frac{6}{10}$  inch as opposed to  $\frac{9}{10}$  in two of the latter species which I received in the flesh from London, the less *breadth* of the ears being also very marked, and the length of the tail being only  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in. as opposed to  $8\frac{1}{3}$  in.

It is much to be deplored that, with the facilities afforded at the present time by good text-books and reliable observers, there are yet to be found people who prefer to rely upon their own hasty generalisations, and who will record species without possessing the critical knowledge to discriminate between allied forms, if, by so doing, they can swell the list of county faunas (already containing far more species than have ever occurred). Going farther, one has only to compare the lists of British animals as issued by bird-stuffers, dealers, and criminally-careless observers, with those issued by authority, to be convinced that, owing to causes which those behind the scenes will readily recognize, the *British* faunal lists—*especially the ornithological ones*—might be still more curtailed than they have been in that excellent list issued under the auspices of the British Ornithologists’ Union. The amount of trouble and annoyance given by the records of unskilled observers, or of that worst class of all—semi-scientific people who back their own opinion rather than be guided by experts—is incalculable, and in these pages are to be found many such instances as that of the Black Rat. Indeed, I may say that the issue of this book has been considerably delayed by the correction of like errors, necessitating a great loss of time in correspondence, examination, and explanation.

In RUTLAND as in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn appears to have seen a variety in his garden at Uppingham, in 1887, white with the exception of the tail, which was light grey.

HOUSE-MOUSE. *Mus musculus*, Linnæus.

Far too common.

Several specimens of a curious variety were caught at Kibworth, on 23rd March, 1885, in taking down a corn-stack belonging to Mr. Buzzard. One of them, handed to me by Mr. Macaulay, was of a dingy white, with the

exception of the back, which retained faint traces of original mouse-colour, caused by the tips of the hairs being of a dusky whity-brown. As the specimen was placed in spirits I was unable to judge if the eyes were pink or black, but they appeared to be of the latter colour—and indeed this has since been stated to be the case. Whether a cross between escaped albino Mice and the common Mouse, or merely an accidental variety, it is hard to say, but as the owners of the house do not appear to have ever kept “White Mice,” the presumption is in favour of the latter supposition.

#### HARVEST-MOUSE. *Mus minutus* (Pallas).

Rare.—Harley appears to have been uncertain whether this species was found throughout the county, he having met with it in only one or two parishes in the southern division—as, for instance, at Cosby and Whetstone. He stated, however, “It has also occurred in the eastern portion of the county—namely, in the parish of Wolstrup, on the estate of the Duke of Rutland.” Mr. Ingram, writing from Belvoir, does not mention it, but the late Mr. Widdowson wrote, on 6th February, 1885:—“A few—not many—have come into my hands.” Writing again on the 12th, he said:—“The last Harvest-Mouse I had was from Burton Lazars. Distributed thinly, I think, near here.”

Fortunately, the record of the Harvest-Mouse does not rest at this, for Mr. R. Groves brought me a pretty little nest, built between three corn-stalks, found in a field about a mile from Billesdon, toward Uppingham, on 12th September, 1888.

#### LONG-TAILED FIELD-MOUSE. *Mus sylvaticus*, Linnæus.

“Wood-Mouse.”

Resident, and generally distributed.—Harley recorded that, in 1846, he examined the winter retreat of one of these mice near Bradgate Park, and was astonished at the quantity of stores which had been carried in, and which he computed at the fourth part of an imperial bushel. I received one from Belvoir on 4th July, 1885, and since then I found one dead on a small grass-plot at my house, so near to the town as the Aylestone Road, and another on 11th December, 1888.

In RUTLAND as in Leicestershire.—I have found it at Exton Park.

#### WATER-VOLE. *Microtus amphibius* (Linnæus).

Commonly, “Water-Rat.”

Resident, and generally distributed.—Harley remarked that “this species is much preyed upon by the Weasel and Stoat. The Heron, moreover, attacks it, and preys on it occasionally.” He also observed that “young Water-Rats, when first









exposed to the liquid element, appear to have much difficulty in making headway downwards, manifesting great uneasiness in their aquatic movements, and keeping their little Beaver-like heads bobbing up and down and athwart, exactly like drowning puppies."

I was witness to a curious trait in the character of this animal on 11th April, 1885. Walking in the meadows at Aylestone with my Dogs, I observed some Rat-catchers at work on an old hollow willow-tree, from whence they dislodged, with the help of their Ferrets and Dogs, several common Rats and three Water-Voles, two of which evaded them by swimming. The third one was, however, caged with three of the common Brown Rat. The latter appeared abjectly terrified at our approach, and at that of the Dogs, and huddled together with their heads tucked under their bodies. It was otherwise, however, with the Water-Vole, which, upon our approach, reared himself upon his haunches, bared his teeth and snapped them, squeaked, and shook his paws at us with the most threatening gestures, and would have flown at us outright, had it not been for the protection of the bars. His conduct regarding the other Rats was fair in the extreme, for he bit them in the most severe and impartial manner whenever they approached his corner. Indeed, one Rat nearly "left his tail behind him" under the quick strokes of the plucky Water-Vole's formidable incisors.

Harley observed that it is "liable to variety." Regarding the last statement I was always of opinion that this species, with the exception of the black variety mentioned by Bell, was most constant in its coloration, having had the opportunity of examining some hundreds—from all parts of England—since boyhood; but the late Mr. R. Widdowson assured me that he could, any season, procure, near Melton, a constant, light-red variety, and, in proof of his assertion, he sent me, in 1883, a mounted specimen which, though apparently sun-faded on the one side, appeared to be of a very light red, almost yellowish-rufous, on the other. Soon after his lamented death I was at Melton, when his widow shewed me a beautiful variety of a light, golden-yellow, caught or shot in the vicinity of Melton on 5th March, 1885. Mr. W. Whitaker wrote me that, whilst fishing at Desford, in August, 1879, he saw "a light yellow Water-Vole"; and Mr. Thomas Aulay Macaulay, whilst fishing at Beaumanor on 3rd April, 1888, saw another, which came and sat within five yards of him, and which he describes as being of a pale-fawn or cinnamon colour. It would thus appear that we have in Leicestershire a constant, though rare, variety, probably peculiar to the district.

COMMON FIELD-VOLE. *Microtus agrestis* (Linnæus).

"Short-tailed Field-Mouse."

Resident and common.—Mr. J. Whitaker, F.L.S., F.Z.S., of Mansfield, Notts, informs me of a light buff or cream-coloured variety of this species, procured at Wistow Grange in 1884.

BANK-VOLE. *Microtus glareolus* (Schreber).

“Red Field-Vole.”

In my “Notes on the Vertebrate Animals of Leicestershire,” published in the ‘Zoologist,’ 1885, I wrote (p. 219):—“I have not yet met with this species in Leicestershire, but it doubtless occurs, as Mr. Ingram, writing on 7th Feb., 1885, and enumerating the Mice and Voles, says, ‘and another also short tailed, but of a light *fox-coloured* skin.’”

Since then, this animal has, as I imagined it would, turned up quite commonly at Belvoir, from whence I received, through the kindness of John Ryder, several specimens: *i.e.*, out of nine Field-Voles sent to me on 2nd and 3rd July, 1885, four were of the rarer species, which, with others, were exhibited on the 6th, at a meeting of the Zoological Section, “E,” of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society, and upon which I made the following remarks, afterwards published at p. 27 of the Transactions of the Society Oct., 1886,\* and in the ‘Zoologist,’ 1888, pp. 65-6:—

“I should not imagine this species to be very rare, but to be merely confounded with the other Vole. Colour I found to be of little aid in discriminating one from the other, especially when not fully adult, and I do not think the hard-and-fast colour-test, as laid down by Bell, to be of the least assistance. The external points which struck me as being of importance were: 1. Tail of *greater length* than in the common Field-Vole, *A. agrestis*, being about one-half the length of the body. 2. Tail more hairy above and *whiter* below than in *A. agrestis*. 3. The paws are whiter, or *not so dusky* as those of *A. agrestis*; the bare parts around the mouth are also a *little* whiter, or purer in tone, and of greater extent. 4. A slightly purer, or more *silvery grey* tint (certainly not *white* as stated by Bell), pervades the abdomen, than in *A. agrestis*; and, lastly, the fur is everywhere longer, and a trifle finer, than in *A. agrestis*, but the chestnut colour on the back is not so *marked* a difference between the two species, as stated.

“Internally, all is perfectly clear, and if the greater length and less breadth of the skull is not quite so easily seen, the presence of *double roots* to the molars, leaving out the pattern of the cusps, distinguishes it at once from *A. agrestis*—which, in common with the Water-Vole, has *rootless* molars.”

I have also found its lower jaw with teeth, and other remains, in the stomachs of a pair of Tawny Owls from Newtown Linford, in Dec., 1885.

## FAMILY MYOXIDÆ.

COMMON DORMOUSE. *Muscardinus avellanarius* (Linnæus).

“Hazel-Mouse,” “Tufted-tail Mouse.”

Rare.—Harley wrote:—“Not common. Met with in a small wood which

\* “On the Occurrence of a Mammal, hitherto Unknown as inhabiting Leicestershire. By Montagu Browne, F.Z.S. (Read before Section E).”





lies over against Ravenstone, and between that village and Normanton-on-Heath," but in no other woods of the county did he discover it. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote, in 1885:—"Not heard of for a certainty, save one brought in a load of oak-bark." Mr. Ingram wrote, in 1885:—"I have never met with it."

## FAMILY SCIURIDÆ.

### COMMON SQUIRREL. *Sciurus vulgaris*, Linnæus.

Resident, and generally distributed.—Harley remarked that it was abundant in our enclosed parks and woods, such as Garendon, Donnington, and Gopsall. I saw several in the drive approaching Sir Arthur Hazlerigg's residence at Noseley, on 21st October, 1885; and Wilson told me that he saw one running from his haystack, in a field by the mill at Aylestone, into an adjoining oak-tree, on 24th October, 1885.

A curious, though not very uncommon example, exhibiting malformation of the teeth in this animal, was presented to the Museum by Mr. R. Wingate, on 18th April, 1876. In this specimen the upper incisors have become prolonged and curved into a half-circle in this manner:—The right upper incisor is considerably lengthened, coming below the lower jaw; it then ascends and curls around, reaching to just below and in front of the eye, forming a perfect half-circle, measuring  $1\frac{5}{8}$  in. on its inferior curve. The left upper incisor follows the curve of the other until it reaches the lower jaw, when it bends slightly away, and enters the mouth, curving upward, inside, until it touches the palate. Both the lower incisors are pushed away to the left side; the right lower incisor not only bending outward, but growing to the length of  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. No locality is given with the specimen, and I therefore assume it to have been a caged animal, fed, doubtless, upon food too soft to allow the natural grinding of the teeth necessary to prevent such malformation.

A young Squirrel caught near Narborough was kept in captivity, for about six years, in the family of Mr. Lees, of Castle Street, Hinckley, being fed on sopped bread and other soft food. Towards the end of its life, as I am informed, an extra claw or toe appeared on one of its fore-feet (the left one, my informant believes), and this grew to about three times as large as any of the others. I addressed Mr. Lingham Lees on the subject, and he replied:—"The growth on the Squirrel's foot was a perfect toe with an abnormally large claw. All who saw it will agree with me that this was the case."

Harley remarked that the species is "subject to much variety." On this point, however, I think he is in error, the only varieties I have met with being the ordinary ones due to sex, age, and season; the young being bright red in summer, and at all ages changing at the approach of winter to greyish red—due, I think, to "point-casting" of the hairs.

In RUTLAND. —Resident, and generally distributed.—I saw in the possession of Henry Cunnington, keeper to Lord Gainsborough, a pretty variety, which had a broad band of white across the middle of the back, and its tail purely white, two-thirds from the tip. Cunnington shot it in Rushpit Wood, about 1878.

## ORDER UNGULATA.

### SUB-ORDER PROBOSCIDEA.

#### FAMILY ELEPHANTIDÆ.

MAMMOTH. *Elephas primigenius* (Blumenbach).

Of Early Pleistocene age, but not extending into the Pre-Historic.—A perfect tooth from the valley of the Soar, 1849, was presented to the Museum by Mr. John Plant. A ludicrous mistake occurs in the 'Report of the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.' for 1861, p. 20, where is recorded the donation, by Mr. John Boughton, of "teeth and *portion of tusk* of an extinct species of Rhinoceros (*R. tichorhinus*) from a gravel-pit, Belgrave." The Museum Donation-book records these as having been found at a depth of 9 ft., in Jan., 1861, and presented on the 31st. The teeth are, of course, referrible to the Rhinoceros, but the tusk is a portion of that of an Elephant, probably the present species. A remarkably fine tusk was found in Oct., 1863, in Sydney Street, Belgrave Road, Leicester, 11 ft. from the surface, in the drift gravel, and resting upon the upper Keuper marls. It measured *in situ* 9 ft. on the curve, but being extremely friable, in spite of the utmost care, some portion of it was lost. The remaining portion—presented by the Literary and Philosophical Society, on the 28th Oct.—after being skilfully treated by the late Mr. J. E. Weatherhead, the then Curator, found a resting-place in the Museum, where it still remains. Its measurements are:—Length of curve, 6 ft. 2 in.; circumference, 2 ft.; diameter, 8 in. A portion of a smaller, but longer, tusk, from the drift in Hutchinson's gravel-pit, Sydney Street, Belgrave Road, reached the Museum through the exertions of Mr. Francis Drake, F.G.S., and is probably the one recorded in the Donation-book as having been found 13 ft. 6 in. below the surface, in the Belgrave Road, on 6th Sept., 1867. The end of a tusk, 6 inches in length, was found at Humberstone in 1856, and presented to the Museum, 1st Jan., 1867, by Mr. B. Warrington. This has been *cut off* irregularly, but whether before or after it was found, there is no evidence to prove. Three flakes from the outside of a tusk were found at Belgrave in 1876 (probably 10th March), and presented by Mr. G. H. Nevinson. The Belgrave, Abbey Meadow, and other river-gravels have also furnished numerous teeth, many of which are now in the Museum.









Mr. W. J. Harrison, F.G.S., writes, in his 'Geology of Leicestershire and Rutland' (p. 48):—"Near Thurmaston there is a very large pit by the side of the Midland Railway main line, from which large quantities of gravel have been taken by the railway company for ballast. In 1874 portions of a tooth from this spot found their way to the Museum.\* We at once visited the place, and from the workmen's account a complete skull of the Mammoth seems to have been found. The tooth having 'dropped out,' was preserved, but the head was broken up and sent away in the ballast-waggons. Further north, at Kegworth,† teeth have been met with; one is also recorded from the Abbey Meadow, near Leicester, at a depth of 8 ft. or 9 ft.‡ and from several other spots in the valley of the Soar." A well-preserved tooth, found in making a culvert in Wood Street, Belgrave Road, in 1883, at a depth of between 10 and 11 ft. in undisturbed gravel, was purchased for the Museum, on 14th Sept., 1884. A tooth—found in excavating for a new gasometer at Loughborough, at a depth of 12 ft. in gravel, resting on Keuper marl, in the spring of 1888—was kindly lent to me for reference, by Mr. J. B. Ball, C.E.

The late Dr. Leith Adams, in his beautiful monograph on "The British Fossil Elephants" (Palæontographical Society, 1877-81), Part II., Pl. XIII., figures profile and crown views of a left upper, last true, molar from Kirby Park, Melton Mowbray, marked No. 35 in the Woodwardian Museum, Cambridge.

#### STRAIGHT-TUSKED ELEPHANT. *Elephas antiquus* (Falconer).

Of Early Pleistocene age, and, like the preceding, not extending into the Pre-Historic Period.—It is recorded by Mr. Jas. Plant, F.G.S., in the 'Transactions of the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' 1858, pp. 20-21, that, in the spring of that year, "the workmen in the employment of Mr. Cayless, of Barrow, while engaged in removing the Post-Pleiocene Gravel, which there covers the Lower Lias, came upon the remains of an extinct Proboscidean of considerable dimensions. The animal, which measured about 11 ft. in length, was lying on its side, nearly two yards from the surface, and only a few inches above the bed of blue marl which constitutes the uppermost member of the lower lias at Barrow. So perfect was it, when first discovered, that the integuments were plainly discernible. In a short time, however, exposure to the atmosphere produced its wonted effects, and, of the whole skeleton, it was only possible to preserve portions of the tusks, four teeth, part of a femur, and a large fragment of the scapula. Some of these remains have been deposited

\* This is recorded in the Museum Report for 1874, as "Tooth of a Mammoth. Thurmaston Gravel-pits. Master Hawke." There are, however, only two pieces now in the Museum.

† A portion of a tooth of *E. primigenius* is in the Museum, labelled "Kegworth," but without date.

‡ This is in the Museum, and was found in Oct., 1871, and presented by Mr. G. H. Nevins.

in the Museum." This was referred to in 'The Geologist,' 1859, p. 174; in Ansted's 'Physical Geography and Geology of the County of Leicester,' 1866, pp. 59-60; also, very briefly, by the late Dr. Leith Adams, at p. 6 of his 'Monograph on the British Fossil Elephants' (Palæontographical Society, 1877); and Mr. Harrison mentions it (p. 48 'Geol. L. & R.'), but erroneously gives the date as 1860, and gives a further list of several occurring at various places, leaving the inference to be drawn that they were of the above species, although there is no doubt that they are referrible to the preceding. The Museum possesses a nearly perfect tooth and part of another (presented 17th June, 1858, by the Lit. and Phil. Soc.)—the only relics of the Barrow specimen described above,—and also a very fine, perfect, tooth, from Thorpe Arnold, presented by Captain Knight (N.D.).

These were originally labelled *E. primigenius*, but, suspecting that they were referrible to *E. antiquus*, I took the opinion of Mr. R. Etheridge, F.R.S., of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), who kindly settled the matter by confirming my impression.

## SUB-ORDER PERISSODACTYLA.

### FAMILY RHINOCEROTIDÆ.

RHINOCEROS (SMALL-NOSED?). *Rhinoceros (leptorhinus?)* (Owen).

Of Mid-Pleistocene age, but extinct before the Pre-Historic period.—Of this species, which we had hitherto regarded as *tichorhinus*, until I took the opinion of Mr. A. S. Woodward, F.G.S., the Belgrave gravels have yielded thirteen upper, and eight lower, molars (some of these having been mentioned by Mr. Harrison, 'Geol. L. & R.,' p. 48), found at depths of nine to eleven feet, and presented to the Museum by Messrs. G. H. Nevinson, Boughton, Gamble, and others, of Leicester, at various dates; one upper molar in Sept. 1881 (donor unknown); five lower molars in excellent condition, found on 3rd June, 1886, and presented by Mr. G. H. Nevinson; and a second left metacarpal (formerly erroneously recorded as meta-tarsal), found on 4th Feb., 1876, and presented by Mr. G. H. Nevinson. At Thurmaston, several teeth appear to have been found, and the Museum possesses an upper molar from thence, presented by Mr. Earby, in 1874.

### FAMILY EQUIDÆ.

HORSE. *Equus caballus*,\* Linnæus.

Of Early Pleistocene age, extending to the present. I was formerly indisposed to assign to the remains of this mammal an earlier date than the

\* *Equus caballus*, Linnæus = *Equus fossilis* (Owen).





Historic (*vide* my remarks at pp. 249-50, 'Zool.,' 1885), but the under-mentioned specimens, some of which—such as the Kegworth example—appear to have been associated with *Bison priscus*, and, at the Braunstone Gate Flood Works and at Barrow-on-Soar, with *Bos longifrons*, lead me now to believe that, taking their condition also into account, a greater antiquity may be accorded them.—Molar found in Oakwell Wood, Birstall (N.D.). Meta-tarsal and first and second phalanges found at Mountsorrel (N.D.), formerly labelled as those of a Stag. Astragalus from alluvium, near Kegworth (1870?), presented by Mr. H. Rice; formerly labelled "Meta-tarsus of a Deer." Right ramus found at the Fosse Road, in 1875, nearly perfect. Teeth (various) from Flood Works, Braunstone Gate, 1885, and a nearly perfect skull without lower jaw; presented, on 23rd May, 1887, by Mr. John Dove Harris. Molar from Belgrave Road gravel-pit, 3rd June, 1886, presented by Mr. G. H. Nevinston, and interesting as being probably of the same age as Rhinoceros teeth, with which they appear to have been found. Portion of right face with the six upper molars intact, from Barrow-on-Soar, July, 1886. Upper molar found at Flood Works, "Twelve Bridges," said to be from a depth of 12 ft. in blue clay, May, 1887. A right meta-carpus, very dense, and apparently semi-fossilised, found in gravel during excavations for Gas Works at Loughborough, in the spring of 1888, which I was enabled to examine and refer, by the courtesy of Mr. J. B. Ball, C.E. All these except the last are in the Museum.

## SUB-ORDER ARTIODACTYLA.

### DIVISION PECORA.

### FAMILY BOVIDÆ.

#### BISON. *Bison priscus*, Bojanus.

"Great Fossil Aurochs."

Of Mid-Pleistocene age, not extending into the Pre-Historic. I was first enabled to add this to the fossil fauna of the county by finding a tooth—a third molar—in the Abbey Meadow, on 16th July, 1881. Since then I have searched the Museum collections, and, by the kind aid of Professor W. Boyd Dawkins, M.A., F.R.S., F.G.S., and Mr. A. S. Woodward, F.G.S., I find that the following, formerly credited to *Bos primigenius*, belong to the present species (*B. priscus*):—Back part of skull, viz., occipital condyles and basi-sphenoid (erroneously marked in the 'Report Lit. and Phil. Society,' 1854, p. 18, as "Atlas-bone"), and two horn-cores, all found in the Abbey Meadow, 14 ft. deep, and presented by the Lit. and Phil. Society, 28th Jan., 1854. A very large horn-core, discovered in Archdeacon Lane at a depth of 18 ft., and presented

by the Lit. and Phil. Soc. on 11th March, 1854. This has about one-third of its length broken, and measures in circumference, just above burr, nearly 14 in., and, at 7 in. above that point, nearly 11 in. Astragalus and first phalanx found at Kegworth in alluvium (1870?). Formerly labelled "Metatarsus of a Deer." Presented by Mr. H. Rice.

URUS. *Bos primigenius* (Bojanus).

"Great Fossil Ox."

Of Early Pleistocene age, but became extinct in Britain before the end of the Pre-Historic Period. The Museum possesses:—Two lower molars (formerly mixed up with Rhinoceros teeth, and, therefore, probably from Belgrave). A left radius and ulna (formerly labelled Elephant), found between 20 and 30 ft. below the surface, in the gravel, within a few yards of West Langton, in 1857, and presented by Mr. Wm. Collins, 3rd July, 1858. Portions of shafts of right and left humerus, both marked "Abbey Meadow" (N.D., probably 1880). A fine skull with horn-cores, from the Abbey Meadow, 1880, measuring, from tip to tip, 2 ft. 5½ in.; greatest width (within 6 in. of tip), 2 ft. 8 in.; from burr to burr, 9 in.; outside curve of horn, 2 ft. 5 in.; inside curve, 2 ft.; circumference of burr, 14½ in., midway, 10 in.; from orbit to orbit, 11½ in. A fine left meta-carpus, very much larger than that of existing cattle, discovered in gravel at Willow Bridge, Sept., 1881, and kindly presented by Mr. J. Hay. Its length is 9 inches; circumference at distal end, 9¼; diameter, 3½; circumference at proximal end, 8¼; diameter, 3¼; circumference in centre, 6¼.

EXTINCT LONG-FACED, OR LONG-FRONTED, OX. *Bos longifrons* (Owen).

Keltic "Short-horn."

A new-comer in the Pre-Historic Period (probably introduced by Neolithic Man), extending into late Roman times, and supposed to be the progenitor of our present small Short-horn cattle.—It is exceedingly difficult in a town, such as Leicester, inhabited by Man from a period long anterior to the Roman occupation, to draw the line between bones of the Oxen of Historic and those of Pre-Historic times; but the following specimens may be credited to the latter Period.—Lower molar, found in Jewry-wall Street (N.D.). Distal end of right humerus, found 16 ft. deep, in Church-gate. Presented to the Museum by Mr. W. Pick on 19th July, 1853. Portion of shaft of left femur, and portion of shaft of right radius (both of young animal), found 15 ft. deep in lias (?), at Thurnby, May, 1881. Presented by Mr. James Remington.

Frontlet, found at the side of the Wreake, Syston, 16 or 17 ft. deep, in bluish clay, June, 1873, associated with fragment of human skull and bronze dagger (see 'Transactions Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' Oct., 1888, pp. 25-26, with plan). A nearly perfect skull, with horn-cores, measuring from tip to tip (but one









broken),  $19\frac{1}{2}$  inches; from burr to burr,  $7\frac{3}{4}$ ; length of horn-core (left), nearly perfect,  $6\frac{1}{2}$ ; circumference at burr,  $7\frac{3}{4}$ ; from orbit to orbit,  $8\frac{1}{2}$ ; a portion of frontlet, with horn-cores, of a young animal; a rather well-preserved pelvis, and two others not so good, all found in the Abbey Meadow in 1880.

A demi-frontlet of a very young animal found, also in the Abbey Meadow, in Sept., 1881.

A left lower ramus, containing three molars; and several loose teeth, found, at considerable depths, during excavations for the Flood Works, in Braunstone Gate, in 1885.

At Barrow-on-Soar (previously referred to) were found:—Portion of frontlet with right horn-core; portion of frontlet with portions of both horn-cores; portion of frontlet with portion of left horn-core, and portion of frontlet without horn-cores.

In May, 1887, I procured a molar tooth at the Flood Works, "Twelve Bridges," said to be from a depth of 12 ft. in blue clay. All the preceding are in the Museum; and in June, 1888, I was enabled, through the courtesy of Mr. Ball, of the Loughborough Gas Works, to examine a portion of mandible, containing two teeth of an aged animal, said to have been found at about 9 ft. deep, in gravel, during excavations for a new tank, but there is some mistake as to the depth, and apparent association with Elephant remains.

#### GOAT, OR SHEEP. *Capra* or *Ovis*.

Originally introduced by Pre-Historic Man, and extending to the present. The following remains, though indistinguishable from existing species, are, from the position in which they were found, probably referrible to the Pre-Historic Period:—Frontlet, with horn-cores broken off at about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches from base,\* discovered at side of River Wreake, Syston, in June, 1873, at a depth of 16 or 17 ft., in bluish mud or clay. (See plan A, and p. 26 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' Oct., 1888.)

Basal portions of two skulls found at excavations in Leicester (date unknown), presented by Mr. Jas. Plant, F.G.S., 24th March, 1884, and erroneously stated to be those of *Roebuck*.

Frontlet with horn-cores, from refuse-pit, Barrow-on-Soar, 15th July, 1886.

#### FAMILY CERVIDÆ.

RED DEER. *Cervus elaphus*, Linnæus.

"Stag," "Hart" (male), "Hind" (female), "Calf" (young).

Of Early Pleistocene age, and has survived as a species until the present time, being semi-domesticated in a few parks in the county; nowhere more

\* Erroneously described in Museum Donation-book, under date 22nd October, 1874, and in 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' 1874, as "Fragment of Skull of Roebuck."

numerous than at Bradgate Park, where it breeds. Nothing apparently is known of its introduction, and it is extremely probable that the Deer now to be seen there may be the descendants of ancient herds. Some interesting figures of these Deer are given in a book written about 1840, by a Mr. John Martin, of Steward's Hay, entitled 'Sketches of Deer, in Bradgate Park, by an Amateur.' A fine specimen of a "Royal Stag" was shot at Bradgate in 1881, expressly for the Museum, for which it was subsequently mounted. Horns and bones, those of the limbs especially, of an ancient race of *C. elaphus*, much larger than corresponding bones and horns of the existing type, are occasionally found. I had remarked at p. 250, 'Zoologist,' 1885 :—"These, if not Pre-Historic, are certainly of great antiquity, probably contemporary with those of the Wolf and Wild Boar." Since then, however, I have given some attention to the question, and some discoveries at Barrow-on-Soar and elsewhere (noted in 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' Oct., 1888, pp. 11-19), led me to submit those specimens to Professor W. Boyd Dawkins, who replied :—"The large antlers are nearly all of the peat-bog, Pre-Historic, type." This opinion was valuable as retrograding the antiquity of these, of which the Museum possesses, through the generosity of the Messrs. Ellis, in addition to those mentioned, *op. cit.* :—Five other *cut* antlers, and portion of skull, with antlers cut off, from Barrow-on-Soar, and, I believe, from the same refuse-pit.

Portion of shed right antler (broken), found at the Abbey Meadow, at a depth of 17 ft., 18th May, 1876, measures along beam to where broken ( $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches above tres-tine),  $21\frac{1}{2}$  inches; circumference above burr,  $8\frac{7}{8}$ ; where broken, 6; between bez and tres-tines, 6; condition intermediate. A perfect shed left antler of eight tines, found at the Abbey Meadow, 28th May, 1881, and presented by Mr. G. H. Nevinson, measures, from burr to end of beam, 2 ft. 3 in.; along curve, 2 ft. 9 in.; inside curve of brow-tine,  $10\frac{1}{2}$  inches; bez, 9; tres, 7; circumference above burr,  $7\frac{3}{4}$ ; between bez and tres,  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ; below crown, 7; crown (of five tines), from point to point, 14. Portion of a fine shed right antler (broken), found in a meadow near Hitchcock's mill, North Bridge, at a depth of 8 ft., 8th June, 1883, and presented by Mr. B. Burgess, measures, from burr to end of broken beam, 22 inches; outside curve of brow-tine,  $13\frac{3}{4}$ ; inside,  $11\frac{1}{2}$ ; length of bez (broken at extremity), 10; tres absent; circumference above burr, 9; between bez and tres, 6; where broken,  $6\frac{1}{2}$ . This was compared with the right antler of a Wapiti measuring 28 inches along beam to first spring of crown or palmation, with an additional 17 inches from thence to top of longest point = 45; circumference above burr  $8\frac{1}{2}$ . A very fine left antler of a Scotch Stag, procured purposely for comparison, measured along beam, from burr to spring of crown,  $19\frac{1}{2}$  inches, with an additional 13 to top of longest point, =  $32\frac{1}{2}$ . Circumference above burr,  $7\frac{3}{8}$ ; midway between bez and tres  $5\frac{1}{8}$ .

These measurements shew the local specimen to be much larger than fine Scotch antlers, and to exceed Bradgate specimens, whose burrs measure, normally,





but 6—6 $\frac{3}{4}$ ; exceeding also the huge horns of the Wapiti, measuring but 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  around burr. I think, therefore, we may argue with some show of reason, that the extinct animal was of considerable size. The 'Leicester Chronicle and Mercury' of 24th Oct., 1885, contained the following:—"SADDINGTON.—A Strange Visitor.—During the last few days this village has been visited by a fine Stag. The animal has been roving about the locality for some time, and has been chased by the rustics and Sheep Dogs. The visitor, although on many occasions hard pressed by his canine foes, had the advantage in getting over the fences, and thus got safely away. The fine antlers of the Stag have startled many persons, by whom he is regarded as a phenomenon. He is believed to have strayed from Dingley Park."

In RUTLAND.—Lord Gainsborough writes me that, toward the end of 1887, he introduced the Red Deer into Exton Park, and he does not believe it exists anywhere else in the county.

FALLOW-DEER. *Cervus dama*, Linnæus.

"Buck" (male), "Doe" (female), "Fawn" (young).

Resident and breeding in semi-confinement in the Deer-parks of Beaumanor, Bosworth, Bradgate, Croxton, Gopsall, etc. Probably introduced into the county at the time of the Roman occupation of Leicester, for, although *C. dama* is of Pleistocene age on the Continent, it was undoubtedly introduced into Britain by the Romans, as no fossil remains of it have, so far as I know, been found in Britain.\* In Leicester, unlike *C. elaphus*, its remains are seldom met with, the only examples coming under my notice being three in the Museum, viz.:—The greater part of a small right antler, sawn from the base and chopped at brow-tine; and basal portion of shed right antler, found in Town Hall Lane in 1872 (depths not recorded); also part of small right antler from the Flood Works, Braunstone Gate, 1885 (depth not noted). The dark race, common at Bradgate and Gopsall Parks, is stated by Bell ('British Quadrupeds') to have been introduced from Norway by James I.; but Mr. Harting has shewn ('Essays on Sport and Natural History') that this statement, which has been repeatedly copied, is without foundation, and that a dark race of Fallow-Deer existed in England long before, and was, in fact, noted as early as 1465. An old deed, dated 1247, quoted by Potter (pp. 117-19), relates to the hunting and taking of Deer in Bradgate Forest, and is interesting as being the earliest known hunting agreement in existence.

A young buck or brocket with budding snags was shot close to Leicester, at Knighton, on 11th Nov., 1887. It was of the dark race, and Mr. Thomas Lander, who presented the skull to the Museum for the "Index Collection," thinks it had probably strayed from Bradgate or Bosworth Park. Col. F. Palmer

\* See Boyd Dawkins' 'British Pleistocene Cervidæ,' p. 20.



writes from Withcote :—"Occasionally one has been seen in the neighbourhood ; probably escaped from some park."

In RUTLAND.—The Earl of Gainsborough tells me that they have existed in his park, at Exton, since the time of Charles I.

ROE. *Capreolus caprea* (Gray).

Of Early Pleistocene age, surviving in Britain to the present, but, according to Potter, extinct in the counties from about the Mediæval Period, and, strange to say, none of its bones or teeth have ever been turned up in Leicestershire, either in the Drift or in the Historic humus. I must, therefore, take exception to the statement made by Mr. James Plant, F.G.S., at p. 37 'Report of the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' 1874, that the remains of the Roebuck and *Fallow-Deer*\* "are abundant in these Drifts," and I regret exceedingly having written ('Zool.,' 1885, p. 251):—"The Museum contains two basal portions of skulls found at excavations in Leicester"—an error into which I was led by Mr. Plant, who gave me to suppose that they had been authoritatively named. Having a doubt, however, as to their authenticity, I sent them to Professor W. Boyd Dawkins, who pronounces them parts of skulls of Goat or Sheep. A further error occurs, as noted in my remarks under the heading of Goat or Sheep. We have, therefore, no certain knowledge that it existed in Leicestershire at *any* period, save the statement of Potter, who, at p. 142, writes of the manor of Roecliff—now written Roecliffe :—"It is said to have derived its name from the circumstance of its having been a 'stocking' or hunting ground for the Roe in the days of the Earls of Leicester." So late as the early part of the sixteenth century, the Priors of Ulverscroft (then called Alwayscroft) "did hunt, course, and hawk throughout the waste of Charnwood unto the saulte of the Parks of Bradgate, Groby, and Loughborough, that is to say, Fallow-Deer, *Roe*, Foxes, Hares, etc."

REINDEER. *Rangifer tarandus* (Linnæus).

Of Late Pleistocene age, surviving in Britain until about the year 1200.—A few limb-bones and horns found in the Belgrave and other gravels, are clearly not referrible to Historic times. The following remains are in the Museum :—Part of a fine left antler, with piece of frontlet and portions of first two tines attached, hind snag broken off, found on 7th April, 1866, in Grafton Place, at a depth of 11 feet in the drift gravel, and presented by Mr. George Holmes. The length of beam is about 28 inches ; circumference above first tine, 6 ; at top, where broken off,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  ; condition dense and stony.

A portion of a right antler, with piece of frontlet attached, and with parts of first two tines (the second shewing part of palmation), hind snag broken

\* See my remarks *ante* as to the age of the Fallow-Deer in Britain.







off, found in Hutchinson's gravel-pit, Belgrave Road, in Aug., 1878, measures along curve of beam, 28 inches; circumference above first tine  $5\frac{1}{8}$ ; at top, where broken off, 4; condition very light and friable. A third portion, of a left antler, compressed and broad (probably of a male animal), found in the Abbey Meadow on 2nd June, 1880, and presented by Mr. Thomas Burrows, measures, along beam (broken off 5 inches above first *hind* snag), 17 inches; greatest breadth, midway between second tine and hind snag, nearly  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; circumference at same point, 6; where broken off,  $4\frac{3}{4}$ ; condition friable. The finest of all, however, is one which I procured through the kindness of Mr. E. Tempest, who presented it to the Museum. It was found during the making of the large gasometer nearest the river, at Aylestone, in Feb., 1888, ten to eleven feet deep, in river gravel bearing evidences of there having been a great scour at that exact spot. The horn, which, though not perfect, is in fine condition, and is not in the least friable, is a right antler, evidently shed, and, for its antiquity, is marvellously preserved, being in such a state as to give the impression that it might be but a few years old. Circumference above burr,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches. At 5 in. from this springs the palmated tine, of which 17 in. remains; width of palm, where broken, 6 in. At 12 in. above this a small snag,  $\frac{3}{4}$  in., protrudes. At  $16\frac{1}{2}$  in. above this it broadens out into the crown, which is 8 inches in circumference. At  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. above this it is fractured, making a total length of 3 ft., following the curve of beam. A rather large set of antlers of the existing Reindeer, measured on the same side to exactly the same point along the beam, gave but 28 in., and in circumference, just below second or bez-tine,  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; the measurement midway between bez-tine and back snag being the same in both—viz.,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. Probably, therefore, the extinct animal exceeded the existing species in point of size. A portion of a right tibia, found in the Belgrave gravel-pit, and presented by Mr. G. H. Nevinson on 19th March, 1884, probably belongs to this species.

## DIVISION SUINA.

### FAMILY SUIDÆ.

WILD BOAR. *Sus scrofa*, Linnæus.

Of Early Pleistocene age, not becoming extinct in Britain until about 1620.—The Museum possesses a Roman vase of "Upchurch" ware—found near S. Nicholas Church, and presented by Mr. Joseph Ward on 10th March, 1851—which contained two remarkably fine Boar's tusks. Several tusks have been dug up, pierced for rude ornaments, one of which is in the Pre-Historic case in the Archæological Room of the Museum, and was first described in the 'Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries,' 22nd Nov., 1860, and again figured and described at p. 10 of my article previously referred to. A pair of very

large tusks found in Friar Lane, Leicester, in 1867, and a smaller pair of tusks and three teeth from Abbey Street (N.D.), presented by Mr. Joseph Goddard, are referrible to this species. Wild Hogs, according to Potter, abounded in the Forest of Charnwood, and, under the ancient forest laws, the hunting of the Boar was limited between Christmas and Candlemas.

MARSH-HOG. *Sus palustris* (Rütimeyer).

Of this doubtful species—being, probably, merely the Neolithic Hog reverting to a wild state—I found the basal portion of skull and one tusk, 9 ft. deep in alluvium, during the Flood Works excavations at Bede House Meadows, in Oct., 1888.

I cannot leave the Suidæ without referring to a ludicrous paragraph appearing in the 'Midland Times' of 15th Sept., 1883, relative to a natural formation (probably a nodule of ironstone) which was found the year before during excavations for a new sewer, in High Street, Market Harborough, and passed into the possession of a resident as a fossil ham! I now quote literally the point of the paragraph, which was published in all seriousness:—

"The frost, however, of last winter caused a slight crack to appear in the widest part, and the warm weather of the last few weeks appears to have widened it, for on going to move it last week it came in two, when, singularly enough, the internal appearances corroborated the belief that at some period of the world's history it must have been a veritable ham. There was a distinct redness where the lean part of that joint is found, with white streaks across it, almost at right angles, where the veins would be. On one side of this reddish part there was a peculiar colour, as though the fat had turned 'reasty,' and farther off a yellowish tinge indicated the position of the 'pope's eye.' Externally the shape corresponded exactly to that of a ham, even to the indentations at the knuckle-joint. Geologists, we believe, are generally unfavourable to the idea that flints or stones of the shape of any living object could by any possibility have been such, and it will therefore be interesting to know what they will have to say to the internal evidence that this specimen presents."

## ORDER CETACEA.

### SUB-ORDER MYSTACOCETI.

#### FAMILY BALÆNIDÆ.

##### WHALE. *Balæna* (sp. inc.).

Two portions of the mandible or lower jaw of a huge Cetacean, resembling, if not identical with, the existing Greenland "Right" Whale, *Balæna mysticetus*, Linnæus, were found during the excavations for the Abbey Park, Oct., 1880, and





forwarded to the Museum. Mr. T. Griffiths, C.E., who was at the finding of the largest (or condylic) portion, described it as resting upon gravel, at a depth of ten feet, under apparently undisturbed soil; and from what Davis and Gunn write as to the "Chillesford" and "Forest" beds, it was at first supposed that we might possibly discover in Leicestershire a formation somewhat analogous to those; but on referring the matter to Mr. J. D. Paul, F.G.S., of Leicester, we decided to submit the bone and its history to Professor Flower, F.R.S. This was accordingly done, and he answered that I was, no doubt, correct in my supposition as to the bones in question having been brought from a distance and used for posts, or similar purposes, at some remote period, and afterwards buried in alluvium or gradually covered over with soil, etc., but that they shewed no trace whatever of what might be called a fossil condition. Their introduction by Man is probably the true explanation, for at Knossington I saw, in 1883, the rami of the mandible of a large Whale, used as an entrance archway to a garden, and these were of considerable antiquity. On 21st Dec., 1887, I received four communications relative to a "Mammoth" bone or "femur" found at New Found Pool on the 17th. I accordingly visited the place where it was on exhibition at a small charge, and at once saw that the so-called "femur" of *Elephas primigenius* was the condylar portion of the right ramus of a large Whale, and was precisely similar in condition, and probably in species, to the one found in 1881, with the exception that the present portion shewed the commencement of the large nerve aperture, which the 1881 specimen merely indicated.

Mr. Jas. Plant, F.G.S., has, I believe, reconsidered his opinion as to this being the femur, or otherwise, of a Mammoth, and wishes to record the bone as the *scapula* of a Whale, and of great antiquity; but the paper upon this and other Cetacean specimens, which I read at a meeting of Section "E" on 9th Dec., 1888, has, I hope, convinced him of his error.

The 'Nottingham Guardian,' in July, 1887, published the following interesting contribution from Mr. R. Hazlewood, of Leicester, which throws some light upon the probable history of the Leicester specimens:—

"As gate-posts these enormous bones are numerous in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. The large fin-bones of the whale were also used as signboards, and there is still (1873) one in existence at the sign of 'The Royal Children,' in Castle-gate, Nottingham. These are remnants of the once important whaling trade carried on in Hull, which took its rise in 1598, about fifty years after the discovery of Greenland by Sir Hugh Willoughby, and flourished till the early part of this century. Until recent times bones were of no economic value; these trophies of the whaling trade were found to be applicable for no other purpose than gate-posts to fields and gardens. Those found in Nottinghamshire were purchased by the captains or men employed in navigating the Trent between Hull, Gainsborough, and Nottingham, and sold partly as useful substitutes for wood posts, but mostly as curiosities. They have not the slightest connection with

whales coming up the river Trent, as suggested by a correspondent. When I was a youth, about sixty-five years ago, there was a pair of whale's jawbones standing between two fields, as gate-posts, on the left side of London Road, Leicester. They formed an arch something like a Gothic church window, nearly meeting each other at the top. A waggon-load of hay could pass between and under them. They were nearly bleached white by the action of the sun and air."

A pair of Whale's jawbones formerly in the possession of the late Mr. J. E. Weatherhead are now, I am informed, placed over the carriage-drive at the residence of Mr. A. E. Weatherhead, Granville Road, Wigston Fields. The Whale to which they belonged was caught off the coast of Cornwall in 1877. I record these lest, in the event of their getting loose and being subsequently dug up, they should be mistaken for bones of an extinct Elephant.







THE BIRDS  
OF  
LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND.

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CLASS AVES.

SUB-CLASS *AVES-CARINATÆ*.

ORDER PASSERES.

SUB-ORDER *OSCINES*.

SECTION *OSCINES-DENTIROSTRES*.

FAMILY *TURDIDÆ*.

SUB-FAMILY *TURDINÆ*.

MISTLETOE-THRUSH. *Turdus viscivorus*, Linnæus.

“Mistil,” “Mistle,” or “Missel”-Thrush, “Storm-cock,”  
“Thrice-cock,” “Thrish-cock,” “Thristle-cock.”

Resident, and generally distributed; breeding in gardens close to, or even within, the town of Leicester.—The late Mr. Jas. Harley recorded it as commencing its song towards the early part of December, and gave 2nd Dec., 1845, and 11th Dec., 1848, as being dates when he heard the Missel-Thrush in full song. It is quite true that it sings thus early in open seasons, yet I think it is most frequently heard towards the end of January and in February. In 1883 Mr. Macaulay reported it as singing at Kibworth on 19th Feb., whilst in 1885 I heard it singing at Aylestone early in the morning of 3rd Feb. During the frosts of January, 1885, I observed it so near to the town as the fields next to the Cattle-market, Aylestone Road, where, as is usual in winter, it was gregarious, so far as family parties are concerned, and feeding with others of the *Turdinæ*, this species being, as Mr. W. Ingram justly remarks, “not gregarious like Fieldfares, but consorting in families.”

Regarding their nesting, Mr. H. S. Davenport gave me the following interesting note:—"Two Missel-Thrushes—call them A and B—built nests at the same time in low trees within six yards of each other, opposite the hall-door at Ashlands, in May, 1883, and successfully reared their broods. A few days later both birds returned to B's nest, in which they deposited nine eggs, of which I took four away, and on the remainder A commenced to sit; meanwhile B constructed another nest a short distance off, and both birds reared their second broods in safety. In the first instance the eggs in both nests presented distinctive features." The following year he wrote on 25th March:—"Yesterday morning I found a Missel-Thrush's nest close to the same spot, containing seven eggs, all fresh, the old bird on the nest. Of the seven, four were of one size and shape, and three of another, and both lots correspond exactly with the eggs taken last year. Do you suppose that there is one cock and two hens? I compared the eggs found yesterday with those (one of each) I took last year, and they are fac-similes." A nest which I found on 3rd May, 1884, built in the fork of a spruce-fir close to the high road in the village of Aylestone, contained birds fully fledged. Both parents came from a distance on hearing the cries of the young as they endeavoured to escape, and for several minutes dashed around our heads screeching, and settled at our feet, trying to entice the young birds to a place of security.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed.—Mr. W. J. Horn writes that he has "frequently found eggs of different sizes and shapes in the same nest," but has "had no reason to suppose they were laid by different birds. *Vide* Mr. Davenport's note, 'Zoologist,' 1885, p. 333," and above.

SONG-THRUSH. *Turdus musicus*, Linnæus.

"Mavis" (often corrupted to "Mavish"), "Throstle."

Resident and common, its ranks considerably increased during the autumn by immigration; breeding in gardens on the verge of the town.—Mr. Macaulay heard one in full song at Kibworth on 5th Jan., 1882, and on Christmas-day, 1883; he also heard one singing at midnight on 27th Feb., 1885,—an unusual circumstance, but previously recorded by me in the now defunct 'Naturalists' Note Book,' as occurring in Hampshire on 20th Feb., 1867. During the mild winter of 1884, I heard a Thrush singing at Aylestone on the evening of 2nd Jan., and again, on the 5th, at half-past seven in the morning. On 9th Jan., 1888, I heard one singing, though not very strongly, in a garden close to the Museum, just before eight o'clock in the morning, and, curiously enough, on the same day I received a communication from Mr. Davenport, stating that, on the two previous mornings, he heard one give forth a few sweet notes at a quarter to eight. The writer of a literary but not very philosophical paper, pp. 24—27, 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' Jan. 1888, claims for the song of this bird a greater





variety of phrasing than can be justly accorded it. Indeed, some of the sentences—especially the two last—put into the mouth of this charming songster can only have been evolved from the inner consciousness of the writer, and the whole article, if not “epigram(m)atic,” certainly results in a “girgle.”

One of the first birds to build, and Harley stated that, in open seasons, he had met with its nest so early as January. Mr. Macaulay has found a nest containing the abnormal number of seven eggs. Mr. Davenport asks:—“Can you tell me why most birds lay an *odd*-coloured egg? Thrushes, Blackbirds, Redbreasts, Warblers, Titmice, Nuthatches, Wrens, House-Sparrows, Linnets, Magpies, Jackdaws, Crows, Rooks, Hawks, and certain others invariably follow this rule.” The earliest egg as yet noted by him was laid on 18th March, 1885. In 1883 he found young birds so early as 8th April, but I saw some young ones which had left the nest and were flying in an orchard at Thurnby on 17th April, 1885.

The most singular site for a nest which I have seen was one selected in April, 1885, in a garden on the “Freemen’s Common,” Leicester. This nest was built on an ornamental bracket, above the door of the “summer-house,” about six feet from the ground, perfectly exposed, and liable to be disturbed by any one passing in or out, while not two feet distant was a growth of ivy covering the roof and sides of the house, in which the nest might have been well concealed. Notwithstanding the exposed situation selected, the bird successfully brought off her brood.

Varieties of this species occasionally occur, and Harley has recorded three albino birds taken out of a nest in the lordship of Aylestone.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common, as in Leicestershire.

REDWING. *Turdus iliacus*, Linnæus.

A winter migrant, generally distributed, but not remaining to breed.—It arrives about the middle of October, and remains sometimes until late in the spring—a fact known to Harley, who observed it “even after the month of June had come in,” which suggests the possibility of the Redwing sometimes remaining to breed with us; and Mr. Joseph H. Ellis wrote (*‘Zool.’* 1864, p. 9248), that Mr. H. R. Hurst, of the Oaks, near Kirby Muxloe, “states that a Redwing built in his grounds this spring. He is a keen observer, and not likely to be mistaken. One bird only was hatched, and he has kindly sent me one of the addled eggs. It is a trifle smaller than a Thrush’s egg, and more rounded at the ends; the ground colour is a greenish-white, spotted with reddish-brown of various shades. I am not competent to found an opinion from the egg, but it certainly is none of our resident Thrushes.” This circumstance is also noticed in Mr. Harting’s edition of White’s *‘Selborne,’* p. 159, as a foot-note. Writing upon this to Mr. Harting, he very kindly looked up for me Mr. Joseph H. Ellis’s note, which appeared in the *‘Field’* of 6th August,

1864, to which, however, is appended the following editorial note:—"We decline expressing an opinion as to the supposed Redwing's egg, but we think the reasons for arriving at the conclusion that it is so are hardly sufficient." Mr. Harting remarks, in his communication to me, that "the description given applies very well to the nest and egg of the Redwing," yet I am sure he will agree with me that little reliance can be placed upon the colour or appearance of an *addled* egg, and so the matter must rest. In some years the Redwing appears in greater abundance than in others, as noted by Mr. Macaulay in the 'Midland Naturalist,' under date 23rd Nov., 1882, "Redwings abundant (by thousands)", and I imagine it to be more plentiful in Leicestershire than the Fieldfare. On 26th Dec., 1884, I was shooting at Knighton, and towards evening was in a "spinney," when a vast number of Redwings flew in to seek shelter for the night. Flock after flock arrived, uttering their harsh cries, deepening to notes of alarm as they observed me. I shot several, to be sure of the species, and this without frightening others, which continued flying into the thicket until quite dark. Although some of them alighted in the tall ivy-clad trees overhead, they flew down at the first opportunity, and rested in thick bushes. I had previously, in the daytime, observed their excreta thickly scattered under these bushes, and conclude that (as White and Harley state of the Fieldfare) this species roosts close to the ground.

Mr. Davenport wrote me, on 4th Nov., 1887, that there were "*swarms* of Redwings in the country." The first he saw on 2nd Oct. Like the following species, this bird, when emboldened by hunger, will sometimes approach very near to the abode of Man, but the nearest I have seen it to the town of Leicester was on 30th Jan., 1888, and 7th Jan., 1889, when I saw several in a field on the Aylestone Road, opposite the Bedford Hotel—the stoppage-place of the trams—and next to the Recreation Ground, in a busy thoroughfare. They were within ten yards of the foot-path—so near that I could plainly distinguish the white eye-stripe and ruddy flanks,—and yet they took no notice of the passers-by, nor of the noise of the traffic.

In RUTLAND.—A winter migrant, generally distributed, but not remaining to breed.

FIELDFARE. *Turdus pilaris*, Linnæus.

"Felt," "Feltyfare," "Pigeon-Felt."

A winter migrant, generally distributed, but not remaining to breed.—It appears about the middle of October, and usually leaves at the end of March or beginning of April, or even later should the weather be severe, Harley mentioning that he had seen a few stragglers in May, and even onward till June. "The species, contrary to the well-known habits of its congeners," as remarked by Harley, endorsing White, "reposes during night-time on the ground, in such places as holms and scaurs, where tall grass and rushes prevail," and,









continued Harley, "about nine miles below the town of Leicester, on the banks of the river Soar, there is a famous place of resort of these Thrushes, called Walton Holm, but more especially do I refer to a swampy meadow hard by it, which not inaptly might be termed a dormitory, for toward nightfall, the winter through, the Fieldfare may be seen flying thither by hundreds in a group," adding that the fact of its affecting the low grounds adverted to is indisputable.

Although there is no evidence of this bird nesting in the county, Mr. J. H. Ellis, writing in 'The Zoologist' for 1864 (p. 9248), states that "On the 29th of July, 1864, a Fieldfare, *Turdus pilaris*, was shot in the garden of Mr. H. R. Hurst, The Oaks, near Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire. The bird had been about the garden during the summer." It was apparently forwarded to the Editor of the 'Field' for examination, but whether received or not cannot be stated, the Editor simply replying to Mr. Ellis's communication of 6th Aug., 1864:—"The occurrence of the Fieldfare in July is extremely interesting, but not new, several previous instances having come under our notice."

Mr. Macaulay's note-book records that "In 1877 Fieldfares were observed passing over Kibworth on the 30th April, and the 3rd and 10th May. In 1878 the first Fieldfares appeared on the 15th Oct., and, in the severe winter of 1878-9, when the frost began on 7th Dec., 1878, and did not finally break up till 2nd Feb., 1879, they might be seen by thousands and shot by scores during the first fortnight, after which they entirely disappeared, and not a single bird of the three kinds was seen till the frost broke up, when the Starlings returned at once, but the first Fieldfare was not seen till 15th Feb." Mr. Davenport saw five near Skeffington Vale on 12th May, 1879, his earliest record of its appearance being 2nd Sept., 1877, when he saw one at Lowesby. He remarks that it had possibly passed the summer there, and further says that he reported the occurrence in the 'Field.' Without going so far as to say that Mr. Davenport was mistaken, I would remark that the Missel-Thrush, which is often solitary, though more commonly occurring in family parties at that time of the year, is frequently mistaken by sportsmen for an early arrival of the Fieldfare. I have been surprised, during the past few winters, by seeing Fieldfares close to the Cattle-market, which is on the Aylestone Road, one mile from the *centre* of the town, and I found that they came to tall hedges of some antiquity which produced berries. These tall hedges, which were, alas! cut down in 1887, and replaced by the fashionable "hairpin," "unclimbable" iron fence, afforded food for many birds, Redwings, as well as Fieldfares, but I always think the latter seem fonder of the haws than any other bird, and, if so, their scarcity in Leicestershire, in comparison with the Redwing, which feeds on anything, may be due to the cutting and reducing of the tall "bullfinch" (bull-fence) hedges to low fences, in the greater part of the county, in obedience to the present laws of farming. Harley says that, although more partial to haws and mountain-ash berries, it

occasionally feeds upon the fruit of the blackthorn when the former food fails it, and, under date 1st Nov., 1842, he recounts his falling in with a straggling party of Fieldfares which were feeding voraciously on sloe berries at Nailstone Wiggs.

In RUTLAND.—A winter migrant, generally distributed, but not remaining to breed.

BLACKBIRD. *Turdus merula*, Linnaeus.

Resident and common ; breeding in gardens close to, or even within, the town of Leicester.—In 1884 I heard Blackbirds singing, together with Thrushes, at Aylestone on 2nd Jan. During the nesting season this wary, clattering bird, is unusually bold, and I have often observed them in the Museum grounds straggling from adjacent gardens, and, as shewing their confidence at this time, I heard (and saw) a fine male singing most melodiously in a poplar-tree in the New Walk, Leicester, on the 1st June, 1885, at half past one o'clock, during bright sunshine. So unusual was the occurrence in this much frequented thoroughfare, that several persons stopped to look around, thinking it was singing from a cage at one of the adjacent houses.

Harley occasionally met with its nest on the ground, and, in the spring of 1844, saw a nest containing five eggs which had been found on the crest and within the flower-stalks of a turnip, several yards from any fence or hedge. Mr. H. S. Davenport reports that in May, 1879, a Blackbird built its nest in some thick ivy on the wall adjoining the stable-yard at Skeffington Rectory, and laid six eggs, all of which were hatched, and the young fled. Shortly afterwards five more eggs were deposited in the same nest, and were also successfully hatched off. He also states that, in June, 1883, a Blackbird at Ashlands possessed itself of an old Missel-Thrush's nest for its second brood. The earliest egg recorded by him was laid on 16th March, 1885. The adult birds of this species are most assiduous in attending to their young, as was evidenced by the following incident, which occurred in a garden on the "Freemen's Common," Leicester, occupied by Mr. W. Squires. On 9th July, 1885, a nest, built on one side of a summer-house, and containing four young, was removed to the other side, and placed in a cage. On the following day, the female, going in to feed her young, was caught, after which the *male* bird fed the little ones until 12th July, when he also was caught, all being destined for the Museum "local" collection.

Two pied varieties are in the Museum : one—shot by Mr. W. M. Squires, at Aylestone, 22nd Aug., 1866—having the ear-coverts and a space in front of each eye pure white, a semicircular band of white feathers at the back of the neck, and a few scattered white feathers upon the crown of the head ; the other—shot by Mr. C. S. Robinson in his garden at Stoneygate, 25th Feb., 1884—having a few white feathers about the body and tail. Mr. H. S. Davenport saw a pied variety near Billesdon in Aug., 1877. I saw in 1888, in the possession of Mr. H. C. Woodcock, a variety (male), killed by him at Rearsby many years ago.





I was enabled by the courtesy of Mr. A. Paget, of West Street, to see a handsome variety on 28th Jan., 1888. As it flew from a bush close under the window, I saw that the entire head and greater part of the nape were white, as also many of the primaries and part of the tail. Mr. Paget tells me that the bird was bred in his garden, and had been about there for two seasons, and that, in the summer of 1887, it mated, and assisted in rearing one brood, if not more. This is all the more curious as the garden is *within* the town of Leicester, and surrounded by houses on all sides. I fear this is the bird I saw at Pinchen's, and which was shot on the "Freemen's Common," 1st Dec., 1888. If so, it must have moulted the white feathers of the tail, as that of this specimen is all black. Its head and nape are pure white, the remainder of the body much patched with white, many of the primaries white, bill of normal colour, but toes curiously barred with white at every joint. It has been preserved, and Mr. George Chamberlain, of the Infirmary Square, to whom it was given, has generously presented it to the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.

RING-OUZEL. *Turdus torquatus*, Linnæus.

Of uncommon occurrence, rarely observed except in late autumn and spring, and does not appear to remain to breed now as formerly.—Mr. Babington\* says (see p. 66, Appendix, T. R. Potter's 'History and Antiquities of Charnwood Forest,' hereafter referred to as 'Potter') :—"On Strawberry Hill, near Sharpley, in the summer of 1840, I observed three or four flying about among the rocks, and had a specimen brought me from the same place a few years previously." Harley stated that, in his day, this bird was sparingly met with in the Forest of Charnwood, affecting the uncultivated lands, intersected by rough stone walls, near the village of Whitwick, where it bred, and that, as autumn drew on, the old birds with their young left the bleak hills, and retired to the enclosures abutting thereon, where they fed on the fruit of the wild brier, elder, etc., shortly afterwards disappearing for the winter. He was told by a friend that it occasionally bred also in Market Bosworth Park. Mr. Macaulay has recorded ('Mid. Nat.,' 1881, p. 256) :—"One shot, in May, 1871, by the keeper, in Gumley Wood. It is now in the collection of Rev. A. Matthews," and, in a foot-note, "two more specimens of the Ring-Ouzel, one at Gumley and one at Noseley." Mr. Macaulay writes me upon this :—"The Noseley specimen is in the possession of Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, and was shot by his keeper" (N. D.). The Gumley specimen, however, mentioned in the same note, is on the authority of the Rev. A. Matthews, who appears to have seen one some years previously. I saw one said to have been shot between Syston and Queniborough towards the

\* Afterwards the Rev. Churchill Babington, M.A., D.D., F.L.S., of Cockfield Rectory, Suffolk—a valued correspondent of mine, unfortunately deceased, 13th Jan., 1889, whilst this was going through the press.



end of 1882, and Mr. H. S. Davenport shot a fine male at Cold Overton on 2nd Oct., 1884. Mr. W. Whitaker, of Wistow Grange, obligingly wrote me that he had, on 20th April, 1886, killed a Ring-Ouzel at that place. Pinchen tells me that he believes this was a female. The Museum has acquired a fine female specimen, shot, with a catapult, out of a hawthorn-hedge at Kibworth, by Master Stuart B. Macaulay, 6th Jan., 1888. I saw, at Pinchen's, a nice specimen belonging to Mr. W. Whitaker, shot by his keeper, Geary, at Markfield, 27th April, 1888.

In RUTLAND, as Lord Gainsborough remarks, it is migratory, appearing in spring and autumn, but does not remain to breed. Mr. W. J. Horn says it is rarely seen, but that he "saw one on Seaton Common—probably migrating—on April 10th, 1886." Mr. N. Lucas Calcraft, of Gautby, Lincolnshire, who formerly resided in Rutland, states that they are not common in the latter county, but that "a few pairs are seen most springs." C. Masters shewed me a wing of a bird, which I recognised as of this species, shot by him at Burley about the middle of Aug., 1888.

WHEATEAR. *Saxicola ænanthe* (Linnaeus).

"Fallow-chat," "Gosshatch," the female and young, according to Arthur B. Evans, D.D. ('Leicestershire Proverbs').

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and occasionally breeding.—Harley remarked that the first to arrive are males, which haunt the plough-lands for a few days, and then apparently betake themselves to the desolate hills of Bradgate and the rocky summits of Bardon and Markfield, and that, in such places, they are to be found the summer through. I have seen the bird at Aylestone more than once, and Mr. W. A. Evans shot two in autumnal plumage, in the Abbey Meadow, on 27th Sept., 1883; and another, a fine male, also in autumnal plumage, at "North End," Leicester, on 9th Oct., 1885.

Regarding its breeding, Harley wrote that he once met with a nest in the vicinity of Bardon. In turning aside to examine the fronds of some plants that were growing in great luxuriance on a ditch-bank, surmounted by an irregular stone fence, composed of boulders and large blocks of loose granite, or porphyry, he disturbed a female Wheatear, whose nest had been snugly built between the clinks of two large stones, guarded on all sides by large masses of the same materials. The nest was bulky, and loosely made. It was mainly composed of fibrous twigs, green moss, tender leaves of dry grass, lined with hair, wool, and some small feathers, and contained six eggs. The female Wheatear endeavoured, by feigning lameness, to draw his attention from the nest. Mr. H. S. Davenport writes:—"In May, 1875, I found a Wheatear's nest with five eggs down a drain-pipe on the turnpike road at Skeffington."

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and occasionally breeding.—Mr. Horn does not appear to have found the nest, but states that it is said to breed in Barrowden Great Field, near Seaton.







WHINCHAT. *Pratincola rubetra* (Linnæus).

“Meadow-chat,” “Utick,” as also the following species, from its sharp note.

A summer migrant, generally distributed; probably double-brooded.—Harley mentioned a common habit of this bird, viz., that “When it is in quest of food, it may frequently be observed suspending itself on fluttering wing over the grass in the manner of the Windhover, the Kingfisher, and some other native birds. It seems to feed on Coleoptera, which it takes on wing.” I shot a specimen, apparently a young male, but too much hit in the body to identify with certainty, at Saddington Reservoir, on 20th Oct., 1885, an unusually late date.

Regarding its breeding, Harley recorded that he had “found its nest in a low bush or shrub, but in a spot only where aquatic plants were known to prevail.” I think perhaps Harley was right in this, if he meant that it builds mostly in rough, rushy fields, for at Aylestone, where it is common, I found in a rushy field, on 16th June, 1884, a nest with seven young, which, with the two old birds, were secured for the Museum “local” collection. Mr. Davenport, on the other hand, writes:—“Found a nest in June, 1883, in a grass field near Loddington, *not at all concealed*, containing six eggs.”

In RUTLAND, where, according to Mr. Horn, it is locally known as the “Clodhopper,” it is a summer migrant, generally distributed.—Mr. Horn writes me:—“I noted the first arrival in this neighbourhood on 23rd April, 1886, and found a nest containing five eggs slightly incubated on 21st May. Their favourite breeding-ground here is in furze-bushes on commons, but I have also found the nests amongst the rough grass on a hill-side, and in the bank of a dried-up pond; they also breed in the banks of roadside ditches. When the hen is incubating, the male keeps watch, and as soon as any one approaches, gives warning by calling “Utick, utick”; the hen will shortly be seen to join him, and frequently leaves her nest so hurriedly as to throw out some of the eggs. I discovered two nests last season from seeing the eggs outside. In the evening the male appears to go off duty, probably to feed; for on the 26th May, 1886, I reached the favourite nesting place of the Whinchats about seven in the evening,—not a Whinchat to be seen. I commenced to beat the bushes, and in a very short time had found, through the females leaving the nests, twenty-two eggs. Six is the usual number of eggs laid.”

STONECHAT. *Pratincola rubicola* (Linnæus).

“Utick.” (“Blackcap,” by error.)

Resident, but sparingly distributed, and, indeed, a much rarer bird than the migratory Whinchat—a fact remarked upon by Harley, who considered it, in his day, especially rare in winter, and stated that, at that season, it

left its ordinary habitat of "the whin-covered moor and wild for the cultivated field and hedgerow." C. Adcock informs me (1888) that, some ten years ago, pairs were occasionally seen, but that he never knew them to nest, and remarks that they are now *very rare*. I saw, at Elkington's, an immature male specimen, shot at Ansty on 28th Sept., 1885, and two others shot at the end of October.

I have no note of its nesting save that furnished by Harley, who wrote:—"May 2nd, 1849—To-day in my rambles through our outwoods and along the skirts of Charnwood Forest, I met with a whole brood of Stone Chats attended by their parents. This certainly indicates early breeding." Further:—"The nest is not invariably placed on the ground as affirmed by some observers, for we have met with it occasionally lodged on the horizontal bough of the Scotch fir and other newly planted forest trees. It is more generally built at the bottom of a bush consisting of gorse, or broom, or ling, and, from the adroit manner in which it is concealed, it is not easily found. The nest is rather large, and is chiefly composed of moss, bents, and strong, withered grass, and lined with hairs and feathers.—Eggs five, and sometimes six in number, pale greenish-blue faintly marked at the larger end with dull, reddish-brown or rufous spots."

In RUTLAND.—Resident and sparingly distributed, as in Leicestershire.—The Earl of Gainsborough remarks that it is "seen in winter in woods," thus bearing out Harley's observation for Leicestershire, and Mr. Horn writes me:—"I saw a solitary female on Seaton Common on 10th April, 1886; I visited the Common many times after, but did not see it again, nor any others of the species. On May 22nd, 1886, I visited Barrowden Heath, and saw a pair of Stonechats, also found the nest from which the young ones had flown or crept; probably the latter, because the old birds were very much excited, but we saw nothing of the young ones. I saw also two female Stonechats, but not a single Whinchat, which I consider the more extraordinary, as Barrowden Heath is distant but three miles from Seaton Common, where Whinchats are exceedingly numerous."

REDSTART.\* *Ruticilla phœnicurus* (Linnæus).

"Firetail," "Redtail."

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding; sometimes double-brooded. Probably not so common as formerly.—Harley noted the arrival of the males several days before the females, saying that they haunt walls and ruins, as those of Bradgate, Gracedieu, Ulverscroft, Leicester Abbey, and even within the town, flitting about the ancient walls of the Castle, and ruined gateways within the Newark, and adding:—

"With us it affects pollard willows and ashes, nesting on the crown of

\* *i.e.* Red-"steort" = Red-tail (see Club-"steort," 'Zool.,' 1884, pp. 153-4).





BLACK REDSTART.

*RUTICILLA TITYS* (SCOPOLI).







such unsightly trees. It will, moreover, take possession of the deserted hole of the Woodpecker and Nuthatch, and such crevices in our forest trees as are produced by natural decay." Mr. Ingram wrote me:—"On Blackberry Hill, above Belvoir Castle, the nest is found every year in one locality," and, in company with that gentleman at Belvoir, on 12th June, 1884, I was successful in getting a nest—built in a crevice of a loose stone wall—with seven eggs, and the parent birds for the Museum "local" collection.

Messrs. C. and T. Adcock wrote:—"In the spring of 1887 we found a nest at Thurnby, in the far corner of a barn, on a ledge under the roof, behind a stone about the size of an orange which appeared to have been thrown there. Knowing that the female would attend to the nest, we secured the male bird, the young at that time being in the down. A few days later we were surprised to find another pair of Redstarts helping the widowed mother to rear her six fatherless Redtails, and seven days after our first visit we found them all outside the barn, and well able to fly."

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, sparingly distributed and breeding, not uncommon in the vicinity of Uppingham. Two nests found by Mr. Horn were built in the deserted holes of the Woodpecker.

BLACK REDSTART. *Ruticilla titys* (Scopoli).

"Blackstart."

A rare winter visitant.—I am exceedingly pleased to be the first to add this rare bird, not only to the Leicestershire list but to the Leicester Museum, through the kindness of Mr. F. F. How, of Evington Street, who procured a fine example (in the flesh)—an adult male in winter dress—for a few pence, from a bird-catcher, who caught it on 19th Oct., 1888, apparently near Belgrave.

In RUTLAND.—No report.

REDBREAST. *Erithacus rubecula* (Linnæus).

"Robin."

Resident and common; breeding in all sorts of situations, usually very early, and being double or even treble-brooded, very late.—The end of February and beginning of March, 1883, were very severe, during which time a Robin was sitting on four eggs in ivy growing beside the greenhouse in the garden of Mr. T. Lawrence, of Stoneygate, Leicester, who wrote me that it sat and hatched its young throughout the snowy weather, and that it fed upon crumbs placed for it on a bank hard by, until a Cat, it is supposed, killed the young and caused the old birds to desert the nest. The Museum possesses:—A nest containing three young birds, found, in May, 1883, built in a broken bottle, surrounded by wine and soda-water bottles and toy-skittles (!), in a tool-house in Mr. C. S. Robinson's garden at Stoneygate. A nest containing four young,—together with the parent birds—found, on 4th April, 1884, in the bank of a small ditch by the

side of the Aylestone Road, and only a few yards from the tram terminus. A hen bird, with her six eggs and nest (the latter cut away with its surroundings as found), procured in a wood at Knighton on 14th April, 1884, and now—together with a male shot at the same time and place—grouped in an effective manner, the nest being surrounded by dead leaves, herbage, and primroses modelled from nature (like the groups of flowers and foliage in the Natural History galleries at South Kensington). A nest containing two eggs—apparently fresh when presented, 22nd Oct., 1884,—taken from a shed in the grounds of Messrs. Harrison and Sons at Westcotes. A nest, built in a flower-pot lying on the ground and containing four eggs, presented by Mr. Boyes, a nurseryman at Aylestone, in May, 1885. A nest, built in an old tea-kettle found in a hedge at Wigston, and containing five eggs, presented, 26th June, 1886, by Master F. Pilcher. The ‘Leicester Daily Post’ of 28th May, 1885, stated that the occupier of one of the “Sparkenhoe” allotment gardens discovered a Robin’s nest and brood in a meat-tin which, having been emptied of its original contents, he had used for tar, and had thrown away.

Harley wrote:—“There is a story told of it in these parts somewhat remarkable: namely, that the young Redbreasts of the year chase to death the parent birds.” I have heard this stated by others since Harley’s time, but can get no satisfactory details, so imagine it to be one of those bits of popular Natural History on a level with the “fire-spitting” proclivities of the Toad and Newt! The eggs of the Robin vary considerably both in shape and tint, Mr. Davenport reporting a nest of six eggs, pure white, found near Ashlands in May, 1880.

A white variety was presented to the Museum as a skin, on 18th Jan., 1886, by Mr. E. Woodfield, having been shot at Thurmaston some years previously. It was wholly of a pure white except the wings, some few primaries of which were of the normal colour.

I feel that I should mention, for the benefit of a few local scientists, that the hen of the Robin is *not* wholly brown, but *always* has a red breast, which is sometimes more brightly coloured than in the male. The “brown hen” recorded is the young bird in its first plumage.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.—Mr. Horn reports the rearing of a brood in 1884, in the disused nest of a Hedge-Sparrow, in his garden, at “The Views,” Uppingham.

NIGHTINGALE. *Daubias luscinia* (Linnæus).

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 66) noted its occurrence about Leicester, Rothley, Wanlip, etc. Harley recorded it from the woods of Evington, Groby, Martinshaw, Oakley, and Piper; from Birstall plantations, Buddon Wood, the Outwoods at Loughborough, Stoneygate plantations, Whetstone Gorse, covers, and thick belts







of plantations in other parts of the county, and wrote:—"None more pugnacious than this bird, for no sooner has it arrived than it becomes a very tyrant, chasing its own species in every direction with great fury." The latest date on which it has been heard by Mr. Macaulay, who finds it every year in the vicinity of Kibworth, where it appears to be more common than in any other part of the county, was 24th June, 1879, and he says ('Mid. Nat.,' 1881, p. 255) that the average date of its *first* song is 20th April. Mr. Ingram writes me that it arrives at Belvoir "in April, and frequents Barkstone, the Kennel Woods, and Calcraft's Bushes, breeding in each of these woods." Although—in spite of the false alarms raised by the singing of Thrushes, Blackcaps, and especially of Reed and Sedge-Warblers to which I have, several times, been invited to listen—it has really sung at Braunstone within the last few years, the first time I heard it in Leicestershire was on 9th May, 1885, in a spinney by the canal-side at Wistow. It was singing in a very lazy and fitful manner, being, probably, a new arrival; otherwise, the cold weather which then prevailed had something to do with its faulty vocalisation. However, it sang just sufficiently to identify it. The next day Mr. Macaulay drove me to the same spot, and, the sun then shining brightly and the air being a little warmer, we both heard and saw it very distinctly. I narrate this, not for the benefit of Naturalists, who can, of course, discriminate between the song of this bird and that of any other species, but with a view to correct the popular error that the Nightingale only sings at night, the fact being that the *Reed* and *Sedge-Warblers* sing more frequently at night, and the Nightingale by day, especially during bright sunshine. I am unwilling to believe that Shakespeare did not know this, especially as Stratford itself abounds with Nightingales, as I can vouch for when calling to mind a certain boating-excursion on a lovely, sunny May morning, some years ago, when I heard, within a very short distance of the town, many Nightingales singing together, in a place which, I believe, is called "The Brake." Nevertheless, Shakespeare says:—

"The nightingale, if she should sing by day,  
When every goose is cackling, would be thought  
No better a musician than the wren."

This digression is prompted by the fact that, when the Rev. Mr. Haweis held forth to the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc. on "Music and Noise" (8th Nov., 1886), he thought so little of bird-music in general, and of the Nightingale's song in particular, as to contemptuously characterize it as "twitter"!!!

Mr. G. H. Storer writes:—"Braunstone Spinney is every season visited by it, also a coppice on the Hinckley Road near a bye-path leading to Kirby Muxloe, and also Glen Magna. The nearest locality to the town that I am aware of is a copse at Stoneygate, near Mr. R. Toller's house, where I have heard it several times. The latest date that I have heard its voice was on 'Jubilee Day'—June 21st, 1887—at the canal-side, Wistow Park."

I have reason to believe that it nested, in 1885, at "Leicester Frith," the seat of Mr. T. Swift Taylor. Mr. G. H. Storer writes:—"Some friends of mine found a nest in a spinney near the Hinckley Road, in 1887. It was built in a bush—I believe a briar—almost upon the ground, and was very untidily constructed of bents and brown oak-leaves. It contained five eggs." Rev. H. Parry kindly presented to the Museum a nest and two eggs found at Tugby, on 2nd June, 1888.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Horn writes me that he first heard its song, in 1886, on 24th April, and that he heard it singing in Stockerstone Wood, Stoke Wood, Stoke End Wood, Wardley Wood (three), and in a thick belt of hedge on the Leicester Road, near Uppingham.

#### SUB-FAMILY SYLVIINÆ.

WHITETHROAT. *Sylvia cinerea* (Bechstein).

"Hay-jug," "Nettle-creeper" (as also the following species), "Peggy," "Great Peggy."

A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.

Harley observed that the males arrive first, and are then very shy and wary, and that "the young, before they are fully fledged, not unfrequently leave the nest, and creep about the bushes and thickets in which they have been fostered, but especially so on being disturbed." He also states that this species is double-brooded, which I have no doubt is the case, as the Museum possesses a nest and young taken by me so late as August, 1883, at Aylestone.

I find that the song of this bird has often been mistaken for that of the *Sedge-Warbler*, frequently reported to me as "occurring in great numbers this year," and puzzling me to account for so many of the latter species being heard along dusty country roads and lanes, far away from their usual haunts. In 1887, however, I was enabled to bring one of my most positive informants and the so-called *Sedge-Warbler* "face to face," and, the songster turning out to be the Whitethroat, as I predicted, upset all the theories based upon the "abundance of the *Sedge-Warbler* this year."

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—In 1886, Mr. Horn noted its appearance on 25th April.

LESSER WHITETHROAT. *Sylvia curruca* (Linnæus).

"Little Peggy," "White-breasted Fauvette" (obsolete).

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Harley considered it very local. Mr. Macaulay states ('Mid. Nat.', 1881, p. 255) that this species arrives earlier than the preceding, but the table of arrivals of migrants does not, on the whole, bear out his case.





I have but few notes of its breeding from Mr. Davenport, who considers it, as I do, less common, or more local, than *S. cinerea*. He writes:—"In May, 1870, I found a nest of the Lesser Whitethroat containing four eggs, the *size* of the Golden-crested *Regulus*' eggs, and the *colour* of a Starling's; in one or two of the eggs the yolk had dried up, making the blowing of them a difficult task: and, moreover, there were no signs of the birds near the nest, making it appear as if, aware of something wrong, they had deserted it after the batch was laid. Within three weeks afterwards, and close to the same spot in the same hedge, I found a similar nest, eggs precisely similar in *number*, *colour*, and *size*, and apparently again forsaken as in the first instance, for the yolks were more dried up. A pair of the eggs to be seen in my collection." The Lesser Whitethroat he has noticed to be more abundant in those years when the Garden-Warbler appeared scarce. The dates of the first eggs taken by him are:—In 1882, 8th May; 1883, 30th May; 1884, 17th May; and in 1885, 12th May. The Rev. H. Parry kindly brought me a nest and two eggs from Tugby on 2nd June, 1888.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Horn says it is known as the "Strawsucker." In 1886 he noticed it on 23rd April, and, on 13th May, found a nest containing two eggs, and remarks that this bird is very shy of interference, forsaking its nest at once if disturbed.

BLACKCAP. *Sylvia atricapilla* (Linnæus).

"Black-headed Peggy."

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Macaulay writes ('Mid. Nat.', 1881, p. 254):—"Follows closely on the heels of the Chiff-chaff, usually arriving in the first week of April, and on one occasion, in 1877, I heard its lovely song on March 24th." If no mistake has been made, this is extraordinary, being at least a week in advance of the earliest date recorded.

Harley remarked that it builds in thick bushes and scrubs, but that he had met with its nest on the ground among tall matted grass, composed mainly of cleavers, soft grass, and other vegetable substances, matted and woven together with cobweb, and lined with hair. The nest may be very easily mistaken by a careless observer for that of the Whitethroat. He describes the eggs as "generally five, greyish-white, faintly blotched and freckled with purplish-grey marks, streaked with blackish-brown." Mr. H. S. Davenport has found the nest and eggs, from 1882 to 1888, between 8th and 18th May.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Horn remarks that this, like the preceding species, is very shy of interference.

GARDEN-WARBLER. *Sylvia hortensis* (Bechstein).

"Greater Pettychaps" (obsolete).

A summer migrant, generally distributed, breeding, and more common than the Blackcap.



Harley says:—"Nidification commences in May, if the spring be favourable and mild. The nest is rather slovenly and loosely put together, which, when completed, may easily be mistaken for that of the Whitethroat. The fabric is slenderly built, and composed of goose-grass mainly, lined with horse-hair. It is placed generally among nettles, long grass, and tall plants; but more frequently we have met with it fixed to the dwarfed branches of the sloe, or rough twigs of the wild raspberry. The species lays four, and sometimes five, eggs, of a greenish-white colour, spotted and streaked with markings of dark brown." They are rather difficult to distinguish from those of the preceding species, but are well differentiated by Mr. H. E. Dresser, F.L.S., F.Z.S., etc., in his magnificent 'History of the Birds of Europe.' The Museum possesses a nest and four eggs, found at Knighton in 1883, and presented by Master Ellis. Mr. H. S. Davenport remarks that this bird was much less common during the three years ending 1887 than in 1884, when he found so many as *five* nests in the course of an hour's ramble about Keythorpe. The Garden-Warbler, he says, is the *latest* builder of all the Warbler tribe known in Leicestershire.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, generally distributed, and breeding, but, as Lord Gainsborough pertinently remarks, liable to be overlooked from its similarity to the Whitethroat. Mr. Horn found several nests during the last week of May, and the first week of June, 1886.

#### DARTFORD WARBLER. *Melizophilus undatus* (Boddaert).

This bird does not occur in the county, and is only now mentioned because it has, by error, been included in local lists as having occurred at "Melton Mowbray, in Leicestershire" (see each edition of Yarrell, including the fourth—vol. i., p. 399—also Macgillivray, Morris, and Dresser, in his 'Birds of Europe,' quoting Yarrell). Harley, however, who wrote a long MS. article about it, contradicted this, and said:—"Mr. Yarrell's informant \* told me that the example of Dartford Warbler which he had described to him as having been captured in the county of Leicester, was brought to him by a countryman, who subsequently admitted that he obtained it in Cambridgeshire," and further remarked:—"Faunists and monographers cannot be too careful in the narration of the statements of country-people and hinds, who are frequently very credulous and easily misled. It was the absence of genuine investigation and research which has filled to suffusion our natural history literature with so much fable and with so few facts." No one knows better than I, the full force of these remarks of Harley's!

In the "Bickley Collection" of British Birds in the Museum, is a specimen mounted by the late Mr. R. Widdowson, said by Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 63), to have been shot in *Nottinghamshire*. This is evidently a mistake of

\* No doubt, the late Mr. R. Widdowson, who was well known to both Harley and Yarrell.







the late Mr. Widdowson's, who was his informant; for it is much to be regretted that this fine collection, bequeathed by a Melton gentleman, is almost useless as a local collection, owing to the fact that, save in *two* instances, none of the nicely mounted specimens are authenticated.

In RUTLAND.—No report.

GOLDCREST. *Regulus cristatus* (Koch).

Resident, but sparingly distributed; appearing more common in the winter months, when the native birds receive large additions on migration.

Harley remarked that the nest is sometimes suspended from a branch of the spruce-fir and other coniferous trees, but not invariably so, because he had met with a nest fixed laterally on a branch of the yew, like that of a Chaffinch. Mr. Ingram writes:—"Often found in our large yew-trees and hedges; it builds on the points of the yew-branches." A nest containing eggs was found, some-time about 1882, built on the branch of a spruce-fir in the garden of Mr. C. S. Robinson, at Eastfield, Stoneysgate, Leicester. Mr. Davenport found the nest and eggs, in 1882, on 16th April; in 1883, on 3rd May; in 1884, on 1st May, and remarks of this bird that it will spend a month over its first nest, but, if the eggs be taken, the second nest is finished in a week or ten days at latest.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, but sparingly distributed, as in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn reports that, in 1883, a pair nested in a cedar-tree in his garden, at "The Views," Uppingham.

FIRE-CREST. *Regulus ignicapillus* (Temminck).

Mr. Macaulay says ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 63):—"Mr. Davenport tells me that he saw a pair of these birds at Skeffington in 1880," and, lest this statement should pave the way for the admission of this exceedingly rare British bird into the Leicestershire fauna, I may say, at once, that I am perfectly convinced that no scientific ornithologist would dare to differentiate the two species, except by close comparison, and, relative to this, Mr. Davenport subsequently informed me that he *shot* a bird at Skeffington which may have given rise to the above note, but, although he thought at the time that it was a Fire-crest, he is now convinced that he was mistaken.

To prevent similar mistakes for the future, I may briefly state that this bird is very easily distinguishable by the two black stripes on each side of the head—the lower one passing through the eye—and a white streak under each, giving the head a striped appearance.

In RUTLAND.—No report.

CHIFFCHAFF. *Phylloscopus rufus* (Bechstein).

"Bank-jug" (as also the following species), "Lesser Pettychaps" (obsolete).

A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—Harley remarked

that two broods appear to be reared during the season, he having seen the first hatch on the wing early in June, the second in August. Said by Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.', 1883, pp. 85-6) to have been *seen* at Langton on 21st Feb., 1882, and also at Gumley, 11th Nov., 1882. The winter of 1881-2 was the mildest ever known in the Midlands, and it is possible, consequently, that the bird may have arrived earlier than usual. I heard a Chiffchaff several times in a small spinney at Aylestone, in 1883, so late as 21st Sept., and, on 22nd Sept., 1887, Mr. Macaulay and I heard it at Saddington Gorse.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Horn informs me that, in 1886, he heard the Chiffchaff in Wardley Wood on 24th March; two days later they were very numerous, but a few days afterwards not one was to be heard.

WILLOW-WARBLER. *Phylloscopus trochilus* (Linnæus).

"Willow-Wren," "Yellow Wren" (almost obsolete).

A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.

Mr. Davenport writes:—"In June, 1882, I found a nest of this species in the plantation hedge at Skeffington Rectory, quite five feet from the ground; it contained eggs." I have received nests and eggs of this bird from Aylestone, Belvoir, Bradgate, Knighton, and other places in Leicestershire, much more frequently than those of the Chiffchaff. Apparently it is equally common with that bird, and its nest is just as skilfully concealed.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Horn considers it much commoner in the neighbourhood of Uppingham than the Chiffchaff.

WOOD-WARBLER. *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* (Bechstein).

"Wood-Wren."

A summer migrant.—Mr. Babington (Supplement 'Potter') wrote:—"Not uncommon." Harley described it as "by no means common," and Mr. Macaulay wrote ('Mid. Nat.', 1881, p. 256):—"Rare. In 1879 it was *seen* in Gumley Wood by the Rev. A. Matthews." This is the only notice I can find, except an opinion expressed in an article (p. 26 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.', Jan., 1888), the writer of which takes it to be a *common* bird on the northern side of Leicester, but who, not being an ornithologist, has evidently mistaken the Willow-Warbler for this species. See also the remarks of Mr. Storer (*op. cit.*, Jan., 1889, pp. 22-3), who tells me, however, that he has never *obtained* a specimen.

Harley appeared to have met with the nest, which he described as of an oval form, built on the ground, and "constructed of dry grass, decayed leaves, sprigs of moss, lined with finer bents, fibrous grass, and a few hairs."

In RUTLAND.—The only record I have is that furnished by the Earl of





Gainsborough, who recorded ('Zool.', 1888, p. 305) that on 6th June he *heard* and *saw* a pair in Tunneley Wood. Mr. Horn writes:—"I am not acquainted with the note of this bird, and have no report of its nest having ever been discovered." It will be observed that the records for both counties, since Harley's time, have been unsatisfactorily founded upon any other evidence than that of actual possession, and believing, as I do, that it is a much rarer bird in the Midlands than is supposed—not having seen a specimen for five-and-twenty years—I await, with some impatience, the specimen which every one I have known has been going to send me "next year," but which I have not, as yet, received. In order, however, to facilitate the recognition of this bird, I give the following distinguishing characteristics of the *adults* of the three species so often confounded with one another, compiled from 'Our Summer Migrants,' Harting, pp. 17, 18, 19:—

WOOD-WARBLER.

WILLOW-WARBLER.

CHIFF-CHAFF.

Larger than the other two, brighter in colour, and has the longest wings and legs. Much greener on back and whiter on under parts, and has a well-defined superciliary streak of sulphur-yellow.

Superciliary streak of sulphur-yellow much shorter and paler.

Legs brownish flesh-colour.

Legs brownish flesh-colour.

Legs dark brown.

Length. 5·2 in. Wing. 3·0 in. Tarsus. 0·7 in.

Length. 5·0 in. Wing. 2·6 in. Tarsus. 0·7 in.

Length. 4·7 in. Wing. 2·4 in. Tarsus. 0·6 in.

Wings, when closed, cover three-fourths of tail; 2nd primary = 4th; 3rd and 4th with *outer* webs sloped off towards the extremity.

Wings, when closed, cover less than half of tail; 2nd primary = 6th; 3rd, 4th, and 5th sloped off.

Wings still shorter; 2nd primary = 7th; 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th sloped off.

Young birds, of each species, much yellower, after first moult, than their parents.

REED-WARBLER. *Acrocephalus streperus* (Vieillot).

"Reed-Wren."

A summer migrant, breeding, but unevenly distributed.—Harley remarked that "this bird abounds on the banks of the Soar, haunting most osier-beds and willow-holts skirting that dull-running stream," and that it is "met with also in the reed-beds on the banks of Groby Pool, at Dishley Reservoir, at Garendon, and elsewhere in the county."

He met with a nest, on 20th May, 1839, fixed to three stalks of the nettle, some four feet from the ground. It was composed of fibrous roots, fine grass and "cleavers" (*Galium aparine*, L.), without the least portion of hair. Mr. Macaulay, though living near Saddington Reservoir, where it undoubtedly breeds in small numbers every year, had no knowledge of its existence, save on the authority of the Rev. A. Matthews, who said that it occurred in the northern division of the county, until I came to Leicester, when, in September, 1880, I



took a few short walks for purposes of observation, and, during one of them, came to a spot in which I should expect to find nesting the Sedge, and, possibly, the Reed-Warbler. This spot, although in Leicester and of considerable extent, is yet very difficult of approach to pedestrians; accordingly, the following May, I, with a young friend, launched my double canoe and paddled through the reeds until we could find a landing-place. The season being very backward, the new growth of reeds was but just springing, and we had an almost uninterrupted view of any birds we might flush. Soon I had the pleasure of seeing, and hearing, both the birds we came in search of; and then we commenced nest-hunting in earnest, with the result that, in about an hour, we had found eleven nests of four species of birds, three of which were those of *Acrocephalus streperus*. They were not, however, so forward in construction as the Sedge-Warblers' or the other birds', all of which latter had eggs. We contented ourselves that day with merely looking on and admiring, but on the 9th June we paddled down again with some ladies, and, in addition to finding many more Sedge-Warblers' nests, found several more of the Reed-Warbler, a beautiful specimen of which, with five eggs, we took for the Museum, as also one with four eggs of the "Sedge." Although we found both species so abundant that, had we been so minded, we might have taken twenty or more nests, yet so charming were they *in situ*, that we were loth to take even the two we did. The nest we have is very beautiful, of a deep cup-like form, placed between three old, and four newly-grown, reeds, and built externally of pieces of coarse grass, moss, Sheep's wool, string, and one or two pieces of Swan's down, superimposed on a stratum of last year's feathery heads of the reed, which are so arranged that the softest part is woven towards the inside, thus forming an elastic receptacle for the eggs. Why the greatest quantity of wool and down should be woven *outside* the nest, I cannot tell, but in all the nests we examined, we found this the case. On the 13th June, 1885, I visited the same locality, which is a reed-bed just under the Castle, actually in Leicester itself, and, although in reality an island—being bounded on one side by the canalised river, and on the other three by a narrow stream—is yet closely surrounded by houses, churches, and factories, and there found the nests and eggs of this bird in numbers, several being secured for the Museum. Most of them were difficult of approach, but one was built in the forks of a small elder-bush, being woven around the upright shoots in just the same manner as if in reeds. The Flood Scheme being in operation, and 1888 being probably the last year the reed-bed will remain intact, I again visited the locality, on 15th June, and found a beautiful nest containing four eggs, built low down among the reeds mixed with the willow-herb. A nest containing eggs, which I came across at Aylestone on 11th June, 1885, was built, like a Whitethroat's, in the forks of a blackthorn growing in the middle of a large hawthorn-bush fringing the river. Another, also at Aylestone, was built in a privet-bush, in a garden close to the water. In addition to the localities mentioned, I find it nests also







at Bosworth and at Thornton. This bird, and especially the Sedge-Warbler, are the two species which, singing at all hours of the night, are so often mistaken for the Nightingale.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, unevenly distributed, and breeding, as, for instance, in an osier-bed near Wardley Wood, so Mr. Horn informs me.

#### AQUATIC WARBLER. *Acrocephalus aquaticus* (Gmelin).

This bird is noted as occurring in Leicestershire, on the authority of Mr. J. E. Harting, who wrote in the 'Ibis,' 1867, pp. 468-9:—"I was unfortunately absent from the meeting of the Zoological Society held on the 8th of May, 1866, when the first specimen of *Sylvia aquatica*, Lath., known to have been obtained in England, was exhibited; but in November last, when on a visit to Mr. Borrer, I had an opportunity of examining it, and was at once struck with its similarity to a bird in my own collection which I had received from the neighbourhood of Loughborough, and which I had put aside to be named. On my return home I re-examined this example, and then felt little doubt that it was a *S. aquatica*. To be sure, however, that I was not mistaken, I sent it for confirmation to Mr. Tristram, and that gentleman thereupon wrote to me as follows:—"There is no doubt about your *Salicaria aquatica*. It is not in full plumage, and therefore may be a bird of the year. The mature bird in breeding-plumage has not the spots on the breast and flanks. There is no difference between the sexes.' It only remains for me to add that my specimen was obtained near Loughborough, in Leicestershire, during the summer of 1864, and was forwarded to me by a friend, under the impression that it was a Grasshopper-Warbler. When we consider that *S. aquatica* is known to breed on the opposite shores of Holland, and is found in the marshes about Lille and Dieppe, we are only surprised that it is not a more frequent visitor to Great Britain than it appears to be. On the other hand, its general resemblance in size and colour to other well-known species, when seen at a little distance, would naturally cause it to be overlooked."

The same specimen is also mentioned in the 'Zoologist' (1867, p. 946), in 'Handbook of British Birds' (p. 105), in 'Our Summer Migrants' (p. 91), and in Yarrell's 'History of British Birds' (Fourth edition, vol. i., p. 381).

As a guide to its differentiation from the Sedge-Warbler, I give the following description of an adult male from Dresser's 'Birds of Europe':—"Crown blackish-brown, forehead reddish-buff; on each side of the crown a broad buffy-white stripe passes over the eyes and ear-coverts; and a median stripe of the same colour extends from the forehead to the back of the head; upper parts greyish-buff with a slight yellowish tinge, each feather with a dark-brown median patch; rump and upper tail-coverts washed with warm

ochraceous; quills and tail-feathers brown with light margins; the inner secondaries blackish-brown, edged with buffy-white; sides of the head and neck and hind neck buffy-gray, with dark striations; underparts white with a faint buff tinge; lower throat and flanks striated with brown; under tail-coverts tinged with buff; bill dark brown; the base of the lower mandible yellowish; legs light yellowish-brown; iris dark brown. Total length about 4·5 inches, culmen 0·4, wing 2·4, tail 1·95, tarsus 0·8."

The young bird differs from the adult in having the "entire upper parts washed with warm rufescent ochreous, the margins of the quills and tail-feathers being of the same colour; chin white; rest of the underparts warm yellowish-buff, fading to buffy-white on the centre of the abdomen; no striations on the underparts, except a faint sign of one or two on the side of the breast."

In RUTLAND.—No report.

SEDGE-WARBLER. *Acrocephalus phragmitis* (Bechstein).

"Reed-Fauvette" (obsolete).

A summer migrant, generally distributed, and breeding.—Harley wrote:—"The Sedge-Warbler haunts hedges away from humid tracts, and appears to associate more with the Whitethroat than with its congener, the Reed-Warbler, the personal appearance of which it so much resembles."\*

Harley further stated that he possessed a nest beautifully and ingeniously attached to three twigs of osier, suspended within a fork about three feet from the ground. Mr. Davenport says:—"In June, 1883, I found a nest of this species built at the top of a 'bullfinch hedge,' quite ten feet from the ground, near Shangton Holt. It contained four eggs." He also writes:—"Sedge-Warblers are very fond of laying six eggs; Bullfinches and Greenfinches likewise." I have found nests, at the Castle reed-bed, built, as described by Harley, both in reeds and in forks of osiers, and also, as on 11th June, 1885, in the middle of a small, isolated, whitethorn-bush, by a ditch at Aylestone. This nest was extremely well constructed, and lined with the tufts of the reed.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, generally distributed, and breeding.—Two of the nests found by Mr. Horn in 1886 each contained a Cuckoo's egg.

GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER. *Locustella naevia* (Boddaert).

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Mentioned by Harley as being "very locally distributed," and most numerous along the skirts of the woods of Newtown Linford; also plentifully distributed in the wooded districts of Beaumanor, Garendon, and Swithland. He remarked that, on showery evenings in May and June, "its voice may be heard in the

\* See my remarks as to the song of the Whitethroat, p. 52.





woodlands till ten o'clock, long after other birds have gone to repose." I have not met with this bird around Leicester.

Mr. Macaulay records ('Mid. Nat.,' 1881, p. 255):—"Always heard, but very seldom seen. The only time I have seen it was when a pair built under a bush in the garden at Gumley Rectory, and when the young were hatched I contrived to obtain a good view of the old bird when engaged in feeding the young." Mr. Davenport found a nest in May, 1879, in Skeffington Wood, with five eggs; another in May, 1883, in a spinney near Ashlands, containing six eggs, and a third on 21st May, 1884. In 1886 it nested in Merevale Wood or Mirabel Hole Wood, a Fox-cover near Stockerstone (*vide* Mr. Horn's note below). On 4th June, 1887, the Rev. Hugh Parry, of Tugby, took, from under a briar-bush in Tugby Wood, a nest and six eggs, two of which, and the nest, he kindly presented to the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and breeding.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it has been reported at Luffenham by Mr. A. G. Elliott; at Hornsby by Mr. J. Birch; at Exton by W. Bell; at Manton by Mr. J. Whitaker. In Morris's 'British Birds,' vol. iii., p. 180, it is stated:—"It is not uncommon in the county of Rutland, in the neighbourhood of Uppingham," and this statement is borne out by the observation of Mr. W. J. Horn, who writes:—"I first saw this bird on 23rd April, 1886, and, as I stood within a few feet of it, I had a good view, the bird going on with its feeding and taking no notice of me whatever. The next day I heard its remarkable note in three different places, and there remained to breed at least seven pairs of these birds: viz., one pair in Merevale Wood (Leicestershire); three pairs in Stoke Wood; two pairs in Wardley Wood; and one pair took up their quarters in a thick hedge on the road leading from Uppingham to Beaumont Chase. One of the masters in Uppingham School found the nest with eggs many years ago. On one occasion I heard a Grasshopper-Warbler and two Nightingales all singing at the same time at mid-day."

#### SUB-FAMILY *ACCENTORINÆ*.

HEDGE-SPARROW. *Accentor modularis* (Linnæus).

"Dunnock," "Shuffle-wing."

Resident and common; sometimes double-brooded.—Harley remarked that it is liable to a tubercular disease, he having seen the eyelids, base of the bill, and a great part of the occiput covered with small tubercles and warts—a peculiarity which I have frequently noticed in this bird, whose feet are also liable to be similarly affected.

C. Adcock informs me that, in the summer of 1886, he had a pretty variety, the wings and back being of a cream colour.



In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.—Mr. Horn writes that, in 1886, he found a nest containing a Cuckoo's egg.

ALPINE ACCENTOR. *Accentor collaris* (Scopoli).

This more-than-rare bird is, I believe, credited to Rutland—but !

FAMILY CINCLIDÆ.

DIPPER. *Cinclus aquaticus*, Bechstein.

“Water-Ouzel.”

Formerly resident, but now very rare.—Mr. Babington wrote (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 66):—“Seen in the shallow pools of the rocky rivulet which runs from Kite-hill to the Reservoir, when the Forest began to be inclosed.” According to Harley, it occurred on the brook which flows down from the Forest of Charnwood by way of Gracedieu Priory, and was also observed by him on the brook which rises near Copt Oak and flows by Belton and Sheepshed, and into the Soar. Adams shot an example (in Harley's time) on the stream which passes through Bradgate Park. Mr. Macaulay writes (‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1882, p. 63):—“One was shot some years ago out of a brook near Noseley, and is now in Sir A. Hazlerigg's collection.” I purchased for the Museum a specimen said to have been shot near Syston or Queniborough about 1880, and the keeper of Thornton Reservoir told me that he had procured specimens there more than once during the past few years.

In RUTLAND.—Mr. Horn writes:—“No authentic report; one is said to have been seen in the Welland Valley, and it is reported from Thorpe-by-Water by Mr. Thomas Northen; there is no record of date.”

FAMILY PANURIDÆ.

BEARDED TITMOUSE. *Panurus biarmicus* (Linnæus).

“Reedling,” “Reed-Pheasant.”

Formerly occurring, but now rare.—In October, 1885, I purchased from Elkington a pair of these birds, which he assured me were shot by T. Freer, some ten or twelve years before, at the “back-water,” Bede House Meadows, Leicester; and on 3rd Dec., 1885, I succeeded in finding Freer, now a very old man, living in a house next the “Black Horse” at Aylestone, and he remembered the circumstance perfectly, telling me that there were six or seven birds in the flock, to which he was attracted by their peculiar note—a piping warble,—and that he shot three, one of them very badly. This







was on 10th Nov., 1870, and he had never seen others, before or since. It appears that, of the three birds shot, two were males and one female. One male went to the Museum, and the pair to Elkington. Mentioning these to Turner, he said it was no doubt the case, as he had received several about 1876-7, shot at the reed-beds under the Castle, Leicester, and that he always imagined they bred there. Mr. H. A. Payne, of Enville, gave me a note of the occurrence of this bird at Groby Pool, and thinking he might be mistaken, I suggested the immature Reed-Bunting, whereupon he wrote:—"I know the Reed-Bunting well, and am sure that I did not mistake them for Tits. I have no doubt in my mind about the birds my friend and I saw at Groby Pool being Bearded Tits. There were about a dozen of them running up the reeds, and popping in and out the rushes. This was in July, 1883."

In RUTLAND.—No report.

## FAMILY PARIDÆ.

BRITISH LONG-TAILED TITMOUSE. *Acredula caudata rosea* (Blyth).

"Bottle-jug," "Bottle-Tit," "Mumruffin."

Resident, but sparingly distributed.—Harley wrote:—"Pretty plentiful in thickly-wooded tracts, as, for example, the vicinity of Newtown Linford, Groby, and Ansty." I never met with this bird in Leicestershire until Partridge-shooting in Sept., 1887, when I saw a small colony haunting tall hedges, as is their wont, just above Saddington Reservoir. Again, when Rabbit-shooting in the "Bay" at Billesdon Coplow, on 17th Nov. of the same year, I saw another small flock (one of which I shot), and therefore conclude that the species is locally distributed, and by no means common.

I have received the nest from Belvoir, Bradgate, and Braunstone, and Mr. Davenport informs me that he finds half-a-dozen nests every season; one, in April, 1883, being built in a thorn-bush in Tugby Wood, and containing thirteen eggs.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, but sparingly distributed.

GREAT TITMOUSE. *Parus major*, Lin

"Blackcap" (by error), "Great Tit," "Ox-eye Tit," "Saw-sharpener" (in allusion to its note), "Tom Tit."

Resident, and generally distributed.—In June, 1883, I found, in an apple-tree at Aylestone Hall, a nest of this species in juxtaposition with a nest of the Blue Tit, both containing young. It is well known what singular situations this bird and the Blue Tit will sometimes choose for nesting, but never, perhaps,

was a more extraordinary spot selected than in the summer of 1887, when a pair of these birds built their nest in an iron post, common to the gates of the front gardens of two houses (part of a row of five) on the Aylestone Road, close to the Lansdowne Road, and in an extremely exposed position, not more than two feet from the ground, abutting on the causeway, and only, of course, a few yards from the tram-lines, of a very public road often thronged with traffic, especially on such occasions as Bicycle-races, Cricket-matches, etc., at which times, and particularly on the day of the Infirmary Sports (20th June), and "Jubilee" Day (21st), I noticed from my window both parent birds bringing food to their young, which they did in the slyest possible manner, watching their opportunity as it were. Indeed, so quick were they that it was often difficult to see if they really entered the hollow post; and, on one occasion, feeling certain the hen was in, I attempted to make her fly out by banging the post and inserting a long straw, but to no avail, and yet, no sooner had I left, walked up the path, and again taken up my position at the window, than she emerged. I am happy to say they apparently brought off their brood safe and sound—which is extraordinary, as, in addition to prowling Cats and Dogs, there was the ordinary traffic, with work-people passing and re-passing, morning and night, besides the occupants of the houses, who were constantly passing to and fro, and banging the gates. So quick and secret were these birds, that the people living in one of the two houses, with their children, had no idea of their existence.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed.

#### BRITISH COAL TITMOUSE. *Parus ater britannicus* (Sharpe and Dresser).

Resident, generally distributed, and commoner of late years than the following species, from which it may be readily distinguished by the possession of two white alar bars and a whitish nape.—According to Harley this species builds in hollow and decayed timber-trees, and in crevices in old walls and buildings.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, generally distributed, and commoner of late years, than the following species.—Mr. Horn found its nest on a level with the ground, in a stump, on 25th April, 1886, and on 13th May it contained eleven eggs.

#### MARSH-TITMOUSE. *Parus palustris*, Linnæus.

Resident, but sparingly distributed.

Harley remarked that it is partial to the willow and alder, in the decayed boles and branches of which it nests, and that it also affects the Scotch fir and other coniferous trees when decayed. Two, sent from Belvoir by Mr. Ingram, were shot on 14th Jan., 1886, one of which (a female) is now in the Museum. Mr. Davenport wrote in Dec., 1887:—"This bird nested at Keythorpe in the summer of 1886; the eggs were taken, and the old bird, I grieve to say, killed. The only other instance of its nesting in the county coming under my notice





was three or four years back, when I found the nest in a hole in a rotten branch of a tree in Skeffington Wood. The bird was then building, and went on with its occupation entirely regardless of me. Seven eggs were eventually laid. The Great, Blue, and Coal Titmice are by no means so indifferent to the presence of spectators when building."

In RUTLAND.—Resident, but sparingly distributed.

BLUE TITMOUSE. *Parus cæruleus*, Linnæus.

"Blue-cap," "Blue Tit," "Tom-Tit."

Resident and common.—Harley recounted how a female Blue Tit, barbarously dragged out of her nest in a hole in a plum-tree by means of a stick and wire, returned with its mate, when set at liberty, and attacked, in a furious manner, the hands of the robber. On 5th June, 1883, Mr. Davenport found a nest of the Blue Titmouse, built inside an old nest of the Song-Thrush in a thorn-bush at Loddington Redditch, containing nine eggs, on which the old bird was sitting hard. The Museum possesses a group of nine young ones and the mother bird, taken out of a hole in an apple-tree at Aylestone in 1883. Mr. Ingram shewed me a nest, built in the mouth of a Faun's head which formed a decoration on the base of an urn, in the gardens at Belvoir Castle. Another nest was formed in an ancient howitzer in the same grounds. Dr. C. J. Bond wrote me, on 27th June, 1887:—"Walking down Regent's Road yesterday, I saw a Blue Tit (Tom Tit) perch on a lamp-post with a caterpillar in its beak, and then disappear inside the post, at the top, where the gas-pipe comes out of the hollow iron post, when I distinctly heard the young birds, close to the top. I should hardly have thought the bird would have had the hardihood to build within a few inches of a flaring gas-jet, and daily visited by the lamplighter with his torch; they must have had perpetual day."

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.

FAMILY SIT TID Æ.

NUTHATCH. *Sitta cæsia* (Wolf).

"Nut-jobber."

Resident, and sparingly distributed in wooded districts.—According to Harley, it occurs at Bosworth, Bradgate, Croxton, Donington, and Garendon. I have found it so near to Leicester as at Knighton, and at Kibworth and Wistow it is fairly common.

Harley once found its nest adroitly concealed in a mortice-hole of a gate-post near one of our large woods, and said that at Garendon there was a fine walnut-tree, standing by the lake near the house, which was used for many years as a nesting-place by the Nuthatch, and he remarked, justly enough, that the eggs are



scarcely to be distinguished from those of the Great Tit. Mr. Davenport found a nest containing five eggs, at Noseley, in May, 1882.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and sparingly distributed in wooded districts.

## FAMILY TROGLODYTIDÆ.

WREN. *Troglodytes parvulus* (Koch).

“Jenny-Wren,” “Kitty-Wren.”

Resident and common.—Harley mentioned its well-known habit of congregating of an evening, in the winter months, and retiring to repose in out-houses, granaries, etc., etc. He said that, at one time, about a dozen Wrens were found, on a cold winter evening, secreted within the chimney of an out-house near his father's residence.

It builds in all situations: holes in walls, in ivy, in banks; and the Museum possesses one built in an old hat, found in a garden on the Hinckley Road, in May, 1884. Many nests appear to be begun in the spring, and are finished with the exception of the inner lining of feathers. These, which are commonly called “cock's nests,” are popularly supposed to be built by the cock for amusement, or from some exuberance of fancy. Dresser's opinion is that they are used as houses of refuge in cold or inclement weather—an opinion shared, as he says, by many other naturalists (see ‘Birds of Europe’). Harley, however, believed that they are not built by the Wren at all, but by the Dormouse.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.

## FAMILY MOTACILLIDÆ.

WHITE WAGTAIL. *Motacilla alba*, Linnæus.

No authentic note of the occurrence of this form in the county is extant, although Mr. Macaulay states (‘Mid. Nat.’, 1881, p. 256) that it “comes and departs with *Motacilla raii*,” and “has been more abundant of late years.” I wish now to correct the error made by him of confusing this bird with the Pied Wagtail in spring plumage. Mr. Harting (‘Our Summer Migrants,’ p. 110), describes in a few words the reputed specific differences between the common form and the rarer *M. alba*, a climatic form, perhaps, of *M. lugubris*, common enough on the Continent, and which I have repeatedly observed and shot in Spain and Greece.

In RUTLAND.—Lord Gainsborough reported, in ‘The Field’ of 2nd May, 1885 (p. 581), the arrival of this bird at Exton Park, as if it were an ordinary occurrence. I cannot but think that his lordship must have seen a male Pied Wagtail in breeding plumage, but, as he has promised to procure me the next specimen he sees, no doubt this matter will be speedily cleared up.

In connection with this bird, I am quite sure that many of the so-called occurrences of *M. alba* reported in the various ornithological journals, are founded







upon error. If this be not so, then I will take leave to doubt its claim as a species, and this latter conviction of mine has been strengthened very much of late, not only by the very large numbers of *M. lugubris* (the following species) which I have collected and examined, but from the fact that, in the British Museum, there is a nest with young labelled "Pied Wagtail. A pair of birds with their nest and 5 young. The male, however, is not a Pied Wagtail, but is the European species known as the 'White Wagtail' (*M. alba*), affording an interesting example of the interbreeding of two representative forms. Norfolk. (June). Presented by Lord Walsingham." To those who recognize what importance is to be attached to the interbreeding of two closely-allied forms, comment is hardly necessary, but the conviction irresistibly presents itself that if *M. alba* is not merely a climatic form, it may be a certain stage of plumage, arising from condition or development, of the Pied Wagtail. It is quite certain that every intermediate stage of plumage between the two so-called species can be found; and if this consideration, and the proved fact of the *male* in the S. Kensington group being recorded as that of *M. alba*, is not on all fours with the interbreeding of the Carrion and Hooded Crows, the rule is evidently so poor as not to work both ways.

PIED WAGTAIL. *Motacilla lugubris* (Temminck).

"Dish-washer," "Peggy Wash-dish," "Water-Wagtail."

Resident and common.—Mr. G. Lillingston Johnson, of Ulverscroft, sent me, in June, 1888, the following interesting note:—"For the last four years I have remarked, about 20th March, a flight of Wagtails on my lawn; they begin to come by twos and threes, and shew on the lawn most punctually at 6.30 every evening, till they accumulate to the number of thirty. They appear to be holding a matrimonial parliament. After a few days they begin to lessen in numbers, and, to my knowledge, only two pairs remain here to nest."

Harley, who appears to have made a study, for many years, of this bird, observed that it seems to pair about the middle of March in open seasons, and, by the first week in the following month, is engaged in nidification. He had found it nesting in the head of the pollard-willow and ash; on a stump of osier, and occasionally on the ground below; also in piles of wood, stacks of coal, and large heaps of slate and stones. That they do select a home amongst the "black diamonds" was shewn by the fact that a pair of these birds nested, in 1885, in a stack of coal on Mr. Gulson's wharf, Mill Lane, Leicester, and made determined attacks on the family Cat, which was sometimes anxious to inspect the brood. Mr. Davenport states that a pair nested, three years consecutively, in ivy on some stalls at Skeffington. The eggs were taken on the third occasion, and the birds never repaired to the same spot again. A pair built in the exercise court of the Borough Asylum in 1886 (see article upon Cuckoo, p. 104).

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.—Mr. Horn noted them in con-

siderable numbers in Sept., 1886, counting between forty and fifty in one small grass-field.

GREY WAGTAIL. *Motacilla melanope* (Pallas).

“Winter-Wagtail.”

A winter migrant, sparingly distributed, and not recorded as remaining to breed in the counties.—Mentioned by Mr. Babington (see ‘Potter’). Harley truly remarked:—“Unlike its congeners, the Grey Wagtail is a winter migrant, seldom making its appearance much before October.” He observed that, in seasons of deep snow, it haunted the Deer-sheds in Bradgate Park, running amongst the herd, and chasing with much agility the few winged insects which haunted such spots. The Museum possesses one shot by Mr. W. M. Squires at Aylestone, in the spring of 1867. Mr. G. H. Storer procured one (a female) on the Hinckley Road, on 22nd Sept., 1884, and states that it was accompanied by a male. He also writes me:—“I saw a fine male at the Trout stream, Bradgate Park, June 29th, 1885; the black patch upon the throat was very marked. You may rely upon this being correct, as I am well acquainted with the Grey Wagtail in Co. Cavan, Ireland, where, next to the Pied, it is the commonest species, commonly breeding.” I shot one (a female) at Knighton, on 22nd Nov., 1884. In late years it appears to have been comparatively abundant in this county, probably owing to the greater number of observers. Mr. W. A. Evans shot a fine male on 7th Oct., 1885, close to the “North End,” Leicester; on the 28th he shot a male at the same place, and, on the same day, a female in the Borough Yard, Soar Lane, Leicester; and again, on 22nd Jan., 1886, a female at “Freake’s Ground,” all of which he presented to the Museum. On 14th Feb., 1887, Mr. Evans saw one in Soar Lane, and again on 20th Oct., and remarks that, in his opinion, the Grey Wagtail deserves the name of *Water Wagtail* more than any of the others, as he has never seen it settle more than a few yards from some piece of water, and in this remark I think he is justified. I saw one quite close to me, perched on a small willow near Aylestone, on 5th Nov., 1885; and, on 11th Dec., 1885, I saw a fine specimen (apparently a male) in the same field at Knighton where I had shot one the year before. During severe weather, on 8th March, 1886, whilst looking over the bridge which spans the Borough boundary brook on the Aylestone Road, close to some houses, I saw a fine male specimen fly up just under me. Mr. Davenport states that he saw one at Galby on 25th Oct., 1887. On 26th Oct., 1887, I saw two at Aylestone, one of which (a female) I shot. The last I saw was on 14th Dec., 1888, at the Aylestone Mill.

In RUTLAND.—A winter migrant, sparingly distributed.—Mr. Horn obtained a specimen about Nov., 1884, and states that he saw one at Liddington, 13th Feb., 1886, and several pairs in the autumn of 1887.





GREY-HEADED YELLOW WAGTAIL. *Motacilla viridis* (Gmelin).

Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.,' 1881, p. 257) writes:—"I observed the Grey-headed Wagtail near Kibworth, on May 2nd, 1880." As this species has never yet occurred in Britain, Mr. Macaulay concurs with me now in thinking that he must have been mistaken.

RAY'S WAGTAIL. *Motacilla raii* (Bonaparte).

"Yellow Wagtail."

A summer migrant, generally distributed, and breeding. Common in the meadows of the Soar around Leicester.—Harley remarked that on its first arrival it affects the newly-ploughed lands, its food at that season mainly consisting of grubs, worms, and aurelia. I procured one (a male) close to the Abbey on 8th April, 1886—the earliest date for forty-three years, Harley having observed it, curiously enough, in the Abbey Grounds, one day earlier in 1843. If Mr. Storer's date (22nd Sept.) is correct for the occurrence of *M. melanope*, then it overlaps Ray's Wagtail, for the latter species usually stays with us well into September, my latest date being 27th Sept. (1887), when I saw several in the meadows at Kibworth.

According to Harley, it builds on the ground among grass, young corn, and tall plants, generally at some distance from the hedgerow, copse, belt of plantation, and thick wood. He frequently met with the nest on fallow lands, lodged beneath the covert of a lump of clay or soil left by the ploughshare, and composed of dry bents, fibrous roots, and small twigs, inwrought with green moss, and lined with hair; but he did not say how exceedingly difficult it is to find the nest, and, although the bird is abundant in the meadows about Aylestone, and undoubtedly nests there every season, it was not found until 1886, when Wilson, haymaking in a field just off the road at Aylestone, on 2nd July, discovered a nest with six eggs, which I saw *in situ*, and secured for the Museum. The nest, which was built on the ground on the edge of a cart track, was formed of grass-bents and lined with hair, as described by Harley, and contained six eggs,  $\frac{1.5}{2.0} \times \frac{2.0}{2.0}$ , of a uniform drab-brown, suffused with a darker shade toward the large end.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, but neither Lord Gainsborough nor Mr. Horn considers it so common as in Leicestershire, and I have, therefore, no note of its nesting.

MEADOW-PIBIT. *Anthus pratensis* (Linnæus).

"Moss-cheeper," "Tit-Lark," "Titling."

Resident and common, probably double-brooded.

Harley frequently met with the nest in ditch-banks, and in depressions in the open field, and wrote:—"The nest is composed very neatly of stems of plants and dry grass, and lined with fine straw and hair. It is rather bulky."



Mr. Davenport found a nest containing six eggs, at Ashlands, in June, 1883, and informs me that a pair of these birds nested, for three years in succession, by the road-side at Skeffington.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.—Mr. Horn found a nest containing three eggs “hard sat,” on the 2nd May, 1886.

TREE-PIBIT. *Anthus trivialis* (Linnæus).

A summer migrant, generally distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 67), wrote:—“Not very rare at Thringstone, and probably found elsewhere near the Forest.”

According to Harley the nests of this species vary considerably in structure and material, some which he had seen being rather bulky, “composed of dry grass, lined with hair and fine soft hay,” whilst others were “externally made of dry bents of grass mixed with moss, and lined with hair.” “The eggs,” he remarked, “are generally five in number, of a greyish-white colour marked with spots of reddish-brown or purple.” Mr. Davenport records finding a nest containing five eggs, at Ashlands, May, 1883.

The Museum Donation-book records:—“Yellow variety shot near Leicester, 1857.” This may have been another species?

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, generally distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Horn writes me:—“On the 29th May, 1886, we found, on the roadside at Ridlington, near Uppingham, a nest of this species, placed on the ground amongst some rough grass and rushes, containing five eggs, incubation having just commenced. This clutch we took. On 5th June we found, a few yards from the original nest, a fresh one containing one egg; this was taken. On the 9th the same nest contained four eggs, which were also taken, and on the 10th another egg was laid but was not taken. On the 12th the second nest was forsaken, but contained one egg. On the 21st a fresh nest had been built, and contained six eggs.”

## FAMILY ORIOLIDÆ.

GOLDEN ORIOLE. *Oriolus galbula*, Linnæus.

Of very doubtful occurrence, for the only note I have of it is by the late Mr. Widdowson, who wrote that one was seen about the Railway Gardens some years ago. It is possible, however, that this may have been a brightly-plumaged Green Woodpecker, for I remember how I was once deceived by one of those birds in Hampshire, and had I not run quickly to the top of a woodland ride just in time to catch a glimpse of its yellow back and undulating flight, I should have believed I had seen a Golden Oriole, and this at a time when I had just returned from lands where a sight of the “Golden Bird” was an every-day delight to me.







## FAMILY LANIIDÆ.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE. *Lanius excubitor*, Linnæus.

“Cinereous Shrike,” “Great Butcher-bird.”

A rare winter visitant, not remaining to breed in Britain.—Harley recorded that he received a fine specimen, wounded but alive, on 4th Dec., 1848. Its discovery and capture were attributed to a flock of Sparrows and Chaffinches drawn together by its appearance. Some days later (on 11th Dec.) he received a second—a fine male. Both were shot by the same person, a relative of Harley's, at Knight Thorpe. Its flight was described as remarkable, being undulating, and occasionally, also, like that of a Wagtail. The two birds quoted above were mounted for Harley by the late Mr. Widdowson, one of which he kept for himself, the other was given to Mr. Simson, of Great Glen. Since then Mr. Widdowson informed me of a specimen picked up dead by the gardener at Little Dalby Hall, on 25th March, 1883. I purchased for the Museum a poor mounted specimen, apparently a female, said to have been shot by a keeper, between Syston and Queniborough in the autumn of 1882. I am informed by Turner that another was shot at Ansty some years since. Mr. Ingram, who wrote me that one was “shot at Knipton, amongst Fieldfares, by Mr. Brewster,” kindly sent me a nice female specimen\* in the flesh, shot at Belvoir, 8th Feb., 1885. Its weight was a little over  $2\frac{1}{4}$  oz. Length, from tip of bill to tip of tail, 10 inches; wing (carpus to tip)  $3\frac{5}{8}$ ; tarsus 1; culmen  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; tail  $4\frac{1}{2}$ . The stomach contained foot and fur of a Field-Mouse. Mr. W. A. Evans was so fortunate as to shoot a fine female specimen (nearly adult) in a market-garden at New Parks, close to the town of Leicester, on 23rd Dec., 1885, and he remarked that its jerky motions, and general shape and colour, reminded him of a large Wagtail. This bird having been brought to me within an hour or so of being shot, I was enabled to make the following notes of weight, measurements, colours of soft parts, etc.:—Weight, a little over  $2\frac{1}{4}$  oz., or 1014 grains. Length, in a straight line from tip of beak to end of tail,  $9\frac{1}{4}$  inches; wing (carpus to tip)  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; tarsus 1; culmen  $\frac{7}{10}$ ; tail  $4\frac{1}{2}$ . Colour of eye, *very* dark brown; skin under eye, greyish-blue; bill—upper mandible, light horn-brown at tip, becoming paler towards base; lower mandible, dusky whitish-pink, becoming duller until terminating at point in bluish horn-colour; gape, whitish-pink; inside mouth, light pink; chin, grey; breast inclining to pink, strongly vermiculated with dusky lines; abdomen, lighter grey; flanks roseate; tail of twelve feathers,

\* This specimen is undoubtedly the form known as Pallas's Great Grey Shrike, *Lanius major*, Pallas, and, according to most authorities, should follow the present as another *species*. Having, however, worked at this group, my examination of a number of examples convinces me that *L. major* and *L. homeyeri*—the latter not yet recorded for Britain—are practically indistinguishable from *L. excubitor*, and not deserving of even *sub-specific* rank—a contention which I hope soon to prove in a forthcoming article.

outer ones greyish-white; legs and toes, dusky, bluish-black. Stomach contained bones and feathers of a bird, presumably a Chaffinch or Robin.

In RUTLAND.—A rare winter visitant.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it was observed at Ashwell by Mr. G. Whiting in November, 1885, and at Oakham by C. Masters in the winter of 1886-7.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE. *Lanius collurio*, Linnæus.

“Little Butcher-bird,” “Red-backed Butcher-bird.”

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and remaining to breed.—Mr. Babington said (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 66):—“Two old birds were shot in Talbot Lane, 1834; and in the following summer there was a brood of young birds (Bewick’s Woodchat) in the same neighbourhood, several of which I shot.” Harley appears to have found it annually in the hedgerows bordering the meadows about Garendon and Dishley. The late Mr. Widdowson “had young ones brought to him from the neighbourhood of Melton.” Mr. Macaulay writes:—“Not very common,” and Mr. T. B. Ellis, of the Gynsills, writes:—“Seen once or twice.” I observed a fine male perched upon the dead branch of a tree in Narborough “bogs” on 20th June, 1885, and, on 15th July, 1886, I saw and watched one for some time at Barrow-on-Soar. I saw, in 1888, two specimens (male and female) in the possession of Mr. H. C. Woodcock, of Rearsby, who informs me that they were shot in this county many years ago, and were sent in the flesh to the late Mr. Widdowson.

Harley observed that, in his day, it nested annually, selecting an irregular hedgerow, intersected by crab and sloe bushes, in the midst of which it built its loose and somewhat slovenly nest,—generally on a bough, a few feet from the ground. The nest consisted of small sticks, fibres, and twigs, intertwined with a little green moss, and the stalks of long grass and bents, lined with wool, hair, and other soft substances. He further remarked that, if not disturbed, it would take up its quarters year after year in the same hedgerow. Mr. Davenport writes:—“I never found its nest in Leicestershire in my life, and I am confident it is a rare bird here, whatever people may say to the contrary.” I was, however, so fortunate as to find, in the possession of Thos. Adcock, a male, female, nest, and one egg, all of which he informs me were procured by him in Belgrave parish, on 27th May, 1885, the nest being built in a hawthorn-bush; he also remarks that he considers the species rare.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and remaining to breed.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it has been seen at Exton by Mr. C. M. Berkeley. Mr. Horn reports it from the neighbourhood of Uppingham and Bisbrook, where there are many high, thick, hedges, and writes that, in 1886, several nests were taken near there. Mr. H. Bromley, of North Luffenham, wrote me on 23rd May, 1886:—“I saw a Red-backed Shrike this morning—a





bird I have not seen before. I was quite close to him, and had no doubt." Mr. N. L. Calcraft observes that a few pairs arrive to breed in Rutland every spring.

## FAMILY AMPELIDÆ.

WAXWING. *Ampelis garrulus*, Linnæus.

"Bohemian Waxwing."

A rare winter visitant, but not remaining to breed in Britain.—Harley stated that it appeared in the year 1827 in small parties of three and four individuals in a group, and again in the fall of 1835-36, when it became partially dispersed over the county, especially in the more wooded parts. During the winter of 1850-1 it was again pretty plentiful, and numbers were shot in various parts of the county. He particularly mentions one, probably fully adult, which was shot at Swannington, and which he describes as having "the barbs of the tail-feathers literally terminated with a wax-like substance of a bright vermilion colour, the same in substance which we find attached to the wing of this species." He adds that it appeared to feed chiefly on the fruit of the mountain-ash (*Pyrus aucuparia*, Gaertn.), the berries of the elder, and the fruit of the hawthorn.

The 'Zoologist,' 1850, p. 2770, records the following:—"Occurrence of the Waxwing in Leicestershire. No less than six specimens of the Bohemian Waxwing have been shot in our county on the 1st January \* last; one was shot in the parish of Stony Stanton, it is now in the possession of Henry Townsend, Esq., of that place: another at Claybrook, and three more near Bagworth. I also saw one that was shot at Belgrave, not distant more than one mile from Leicester; it was stuffed by Mr. Eld, of this town, and from what I can ascertain, all have been shot within a short time of each other during the severe weather we had in January.—William Bond; Frog Island, Leicester. March 15th, 1850."

Mr. Macaulay wrote ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 63):—"I am informed by Mr. Bickley, of Melton Mowbray, whose late brother presented the collection of birds bearing his name to the Leicester Museum, that the specimen of this bird in that collection was shot near Melton Mowbray," and no doubt this is the case, for the late Mr. R. Widdowson wrote me:—"I shot one myself some years ago, near Melton, and have had three or four since." Mr. J. C. Bassett, of Ullesthorpe, writes me that one in his possession was shot at Arnesby, about 1870, by Mr. S. Horton. One was shot at Belgrave about 1878-9, so Turner informs me. Mr. H. A. Payne, of Enville, and a friend, watched a pair for a long time near Bradgate House, in the summer of 1883, and in connection with this it is singular that one was shot at Ansty (close to Bradgate), at Christmas of the same year, by Mr. Alfred Wm. Matts. I saw, in December,

\* Probably meaning during the month of January.



1888, two beautiful Waxwings—probably a pair,—mounted, and in the possession of Mr. W. T. Tucker, of Herrick Road, Loughborough, who told me that he shot them, in the autumn of 1886, in some willow-trees, close to his house, in Park Lane, Loughborough.

In RUTLAND.—A rare winter visitant.—Lord Gainsborough tells me that one was seen in Stamford Fields, in 1844-5, by Mr. A. G. Elliott. Mr. R. Tryon saw one on Barnsdale Hill in 1877, and Mr. Horn reports several seen in April, 1884, at Bisbrook, where a specimen was obtained.

## FAMILY MUSCICAPIDÆ.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER. *Muscicapa grisola*, Linnæus.

“Grey Flycatcher.”

A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding even in gardens close to the town of Leicester.

Harley recorded that, in the summer of 1820, he was visiting at a house in the county, in the ancient porch of which there was a thick oaken door hung upon heavy hinges. In one of the upright door-posts there was a disused mortice-hole some feet from the floor, into which a bolt had probably been regularly shot for more than one hundred years. In this hole a Spotted Flycatcher had built her nest, and, although the inmates of the house constantly passed and repassed the spot, the bird appeared almost devoid of fear, and in due time reared and brought off her brood. The Museum Donation-book records that Mr. W. Gimson presented “a portion of a nest and three eggs, found in an old elm-tree, apparently without any external opening, on January 8th, 1853.” This tree was probably one cut up at the saw-mills, Mr. Gimson being a timber merchant. Mr. Davenport writes:—“A Chaffinch had its nest, with five eggs, in a laurel-bush bordering on the lawn-tennis ground at Ashlands, in May, 1883; but, being unavoidably and so frequently disturbed, forsook it. Three weeks later a Spotted Flycatcher appropriated the nest, laid four eggs, and successfully hatched off; repairing again to the same nest, she laid a second batch of eggs. I found three eggs of a pale-blue colour, with no markings, in May, 1879, at Skeffington.” Writing again, he says:—“In 1886 and 1887 (just as in 1879), I found a nest both years containing four eggs each, of a beautiful pale-blue colour, without a speck or spot on them. This seems a rather favourite variety of the egg.” Every year this restless little bird haunts the New Walk, just in the town of Leicester, and nearly every year builds its nest in the ornamental stone work which embellishes the summit of the “Hollings Memorial,” between the Museum and School of Art. In the summer of 1887 I noticed one or more pairs about there, and in August they appear to have nested there again.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.







PIED FLYCATCHER. *Muscicapa atricapilla*, Linnæus.

A rare summer migrant, but there is no record of its breeding.—Harley wrote:—"A young male was shot by Chaplin on the banks of Groby Pool in the autumn of 1840," and, under date 28th April, 1859:—"Examined to-day, at Collins, the birdstuffer's, a fine male example shot at Markfield." Collins also informed him that he once had a Pied Flycatcher, said to have been captured in Bradgate Park. Mr. Macaulay's note-book records a specimen seen in his garden at Kibworth, May, 1859, "apparently weak and exhausted after long flight." The date (1870) at p. 256, 'Mid. Nat.', 1881, is therefore, apparently, an error. Mr. Macaulay also tells me of one seen by him, which was shot at Ilston, by Mr. Newcomb, about 1875. Turner gave me a note, which I published in the 'Zool.', 1885, p. 461, that, about 1880, a male bird of this species was taken in a barn at Wanlip. Since then the Rev. W. H. Palmer, M.A., has very kindly made enquiries for me, and has ascertained that a Pied Flycatcher *was* caught, as stated, but the man who caught it having left the village, no further information could be gained. Mr. Davenport informs me that a pair of these birds were seen by Mr. Kestin in his father's garden at Twyford on 5th May, 1883, and that they remained about the place, probably with the intention of nesting. The late Mr. Widdowson once had one which had been killed at Melton. I received an immature male, shot at Bardon Hill by Mr. Ward, on 12th May, 1883; and Mr. A. K. Perkins shot a fine male at Laughton on 27th April, 1888, which he most generously presented to the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—No authentic record, for I am quite sure Mr. Horn will pardon my passing over his young friend's statement as to its nesting.

## SECTION OSCINES-LATIROSTRES.

## FAMILY HIRUNDINIDÆ.

SWALLOW. *Hirundo rustica*, Linnæus.

"Chimney-Swallow."

A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—Less than a hundred years ago it was imagined that Swallows hibernated near water! for Throsby, writing in 1793 ('The History and Antiquities of the Ancient Town of Leicester,' pp. 398-9) says, with a fine contempt:—"Some Naturalists have taken much pains to convince us that this bird emigrates for the purpose of living in warmer climates during the winter. I have sometimes thought that they might as well tell us that flies, which are also invisible during the winter.

emigrate for the like purpose. Other opinions, however, agree with observations I have made respecting these birds; which is, that they rest or sleep during the winter months in lakes or rivers, or in the sand-banks or sedges of such places," and he further argues that, as at the beginning of April of that year numbers appeared in St. Margaret's pasture and the Abbey Meadow, and afterwards disappeared, as they often do, for a time, during cold or stormy weather, they had remained under water, for he gravely concludes:—"From the above remarks, and similar observations I have made at other places in the spring of the year, we may conclude that, as the power of the sun increases, or as the season may be mild, their appearance is regulated; and that they are not tempted to leave the places near their winter habitations, till all Nature is, as it were, re-animated by the approach of summer."

Harley recorded that on the 31st of May, 1855, the temperature was unusually low, attended by a strong north-east wind, with heavy rain and sleet. Hundreds of Swallows and Martins perished from the cold and rain, as at farmsteads in Lubbesthorpe, Glenfield, and elsewhere. He also wrote:—"On the 19th November, 1845, at noon, while the wind was blowing a gale from the south-west, we observed a single example of *H. rustica*, a young bird of the year, flitting across the London Road in every direction, overhead, immediately below the toll-gate." In 1887, I saw a solitary young bird so late as the 7th Nov., feebly flying over the houses near Aylestone Church, crossing and re-crossing quite near me several times, this being the latest date recorded for the counties since Harley's time.

At Aylestone I have found the Swallow to be treble-brooded.

Elkington received one purely white in 1880. In May, 1885, I saw a curious variety, a young bird, in the possession of Mr. W. Whitaker, of Wistow, in which the wings, tail, and back were greyish-white, the throat faintly rufescent, the under parts almost of the normal colour but paler, the head and nape faintly tinged with dusky brown, the oval spots on the tail-feathers shewed but dimly, and were of an isabelline colour. Mr. J. B. Ellis has presented to the Museum a variety almost precisely similar to that possessed by Mr. Whitaker, which he shot at Bardon Hill on the 12th Aug., 1886. Mr. Ward says this specimen was reared in the Cow-shed at Quarry Farm, where his children saw it in the nest. It was fully plumaged, without, of course, the long outer tail-feathers of the adult, and appeared on dissection to be a female. I think it is, if anything, *whiter* than the Wistow specimen, but it was not an albino, it having dark, or greyish-brown, irides.

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—I saw, in the possession of Mr. R. Tryon, a specimen shot by C. Masters, about 1881. This was a variety precisely similar to those I have recorded for Leicestershire, which gives me the impression that this is constant, like the yellow Mole and Water-Vole recorded at pages 13 and 23.





MARTIN. *Chelidon urbica* (Linnæus).

“House-Martin.”

A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—The House-Martin, like the Swallow, sometimes suffers much from the inclemency of the season on its first arrival, as Harley related happened in May, 1855.

Being double and sometimes even treble-brooded, this species occasionally remains with us until very late; and Harley, writing in 1851, said:—“I have known the House-Martin to tarry with us in Leicestershire until the 23rd of November, and it is only a few years since the writer met with a nest of that species of *Hirundine* containing pulli or squab young on one of the early days of that chilly ungenial month.” The ‘Leicester Daily Mercury’ of 15th July, 1887, gives the following:—“A remarkable case of bird instinct has just occurred at Melton. A pair of Martins having built a nest on a house in the Nottingham road, found to their anger that a Sparrow had taken possession of it. In revenge the Martins commenced to build the intruder in. This they did most effectually, only leaving a little hole through which the Sparrow could thrust his head. The Sparrow, unable to get out, died with his head out of the small opening. The Martins then made a hole above, through which they could enter the nest, and the dead bird was used as a cushion on which the eggs were deposited. During the past few days some thoughtless person has demolished the nest, which had been viewed by a large number of persons.”

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.

SAND-MARTIN. *Cotile riparia* (Linnæus).

“Bank-Martin.”

A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding so close to Leicester as the Aylestone sand-pits.

The late Mr. B. Widdowson’s diary records:—“Saw white variety Sand-Martin, 18th July, 1869.”

In RUTLAND.—A summer migrant, commonly distributed, and breeding.—Mr. Horn writes me:—“On 20th May, 1886, I observed a pair of Sand-Martins flying up and down in front of my house. Not having seen a Sand-Martin in Uppingham before—the nearest colony being distant about two miles—I supposed they had come to search for food, the weather being cold and wet at the time. I watched them day by day, expecting each day would be the last of their visit, until the 30th May, when, to my surprise, I saw one of the birds gathering material for a nest, and after a short time I discovered the hole they had selected. Standing near the outskirts of the town is a stone wall about ten feet high, backed up with earth, in front of which passes a road. Along this road is a considerable amount of traffic, and any one passing on the footpath would literally brush against the wall. A row of detached houses stands between the wall and



the open country ; and in this wall, about four feet from the ground, the nest was placed, at a distance of about two feet from the entrance. In a very short time the little boys discovered the nest, and, owing to their interference, the birds appear to have left the town." (Recorded also in 'Zool.,' 1886, p. 336.)

## SECTION OSCINES-CURVIROSTRES.

### FAMILY C E R T H I I D Æ.

TREE-CREEPER. *Certhia familiaris*, Linnæus.

Resident, and generally distributed.

Harley well described its nidification thus:—"It builds a beautiful nest, which it lodges in a chink of a forest tree, or between the axils of a large bough of the same, and sometimes it may be met with fixed betwixt two pieces of rough bark, especially of the elm. The edifice is large for so small a bird, being constructed chiefly of bents, shreds of green moss, dried grass, and other materials. The nest is lined profusely with feathers. Eggs, seven, and sometimes eight in number are laid." Mr. Davenport, who finds the nest and eggs every year, writes:—"I am inclined to imagine that two hen birds of this species occasionally lay in one nest; I have found eggs varying so, three of one kind, four of another type, in the same nest." In the Museum Donation-book, I find the following entry:—"Remains of nest of Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*), with ten eggs, found embedded in the solid trunk of an old elm-tree containing nearly 150 feet of timber, together with the two slabs of wood, showing the cavity in which they were deposited without any opening to the exterior.—Presented by Mr. Gimson, Saw Mills, Welford Road, May 7th, 1852." Mr. Ingram shewed me a nest containing young, in June, 1884, built behind the loose bark of a tree at Belvoir, in such a position as Harley notes.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed.—Mr. Horn writes:—"In 1886 we found a nest in Wardley Wood upon which the bird was sitting. The eggs were taken, and upon visiting the same tree a week later, the old bird was found dead upon the place where the nest had been."

## SECTION OSCINES-CONIROSTRES.

### FAMILY F R I N G I L L I D Æ.

#### SUB-FAMILY FRINGILLINÆ.

GOLDFINCH. *Carduelis elegans* (Stephens).

"Draw-water," "Proud Tailer, or Tailor," "Thistle-Finch."

Resident, but sparingly distributed.—Harley found it, in his day, increasingly rare, and wrote:—"No small bird has suffered more from cultiva-







tion and the enclosure of what are termed waste lands than the Goldfinch." Mr. Macaulay writes:—"Owing to birdcatchers in the past, this bird is now somewhat scarce." Elkington told me (1885) that he received it in small numbers in the autumn, from birdcatchers, from the vicinity of Leicester.

Mr. Davenport writes:—"On December 1st, 1887, there were a lot of these birds feeding and singing, or rather pleasingly twittering, in Staunton Wood. I never saw so many together before." Mr. G. H. Storer writes:—"On 2nd August, 1888, we disturbed about a dozen, feeding among thistles in a field at John Ball's Fox Cover, at Arnesby."

Mr. Ingram writes that it "builds in apple-trees; two or three pairs generally in the garden." Mr. T. B. Ellis, of the Gynsills, writes:—"In one or two apple-orchards I know it builds regularly." Mr. J. S. Ellis tells me that up to 1863, when he left Glenfield Lodge, there was a nest or two to be found every year in the orchard, and always built in a fork at the top of an apple-tree.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, but sparingly distributed.—The Earl of Gainsborough informs me that it breeds about Exton, and at Luffenham.

SISKIN. *Chrysomitris spinus* (Linnæus).

"Aberdevine."

An uncommon winter visitant, not breeding in the Midlands.—Mr. Babington mentioned it (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 67), as having been observed in flocks at Thringstone and Rothley Temple, among alders, during 1837. Harley once fell in with a vast company of Siskins (some 400 or 500), in the northern division of the county, among large alder-trees beside a stream at the lower end of Oakley Wood. In the autumn of 1849 the species was frequently met with, but has not appeared since in such numbers in any part of the county. Mr. Macaulay notes ('Mid. Nat.,' 1883, p. 86) that he saw a flock of about twenty in a lane near Gumley, on 15th Nov., 1882. One in the Museum, taken at Thurcaston in 1881, was presented by Mr. J. Ponsford, who kept it in a cage until it died in July, 1883. Two (male and female), taken at Kirby Muxloe, were purchased from Elkington in the flesh on 11th Dec., 1885. Three (two males and one female) were shot and forwarded from Belvoir on 14th Jan., 1886, together with some branches of the hemlock-spruce, and Mr. Ingram wrote:—"I have recently been much interested in watching the operations of a little company of Siskins, which have found a store of food (very welcome to them, I imagine, during the late severe weather) in the cones of the hemlock-spruce (*Abies canadensis*), which are now hanging in great profusion on this handsome tree. These lively little birds resemble some of the Titmice in the quick uncertainty of their movements, darting hither and thither amongst the branches of the

tree, and sometimes leaving it in a body and returning with the same celerity, keeping up a short conversational twittering.

"As soon as a cone is chosen, they proceed dexterously to extract the seed, by removing the protecting scales which guard it, assuming a position according to that of the cone, sometimes above, sometimes hanging to the branches that support it. When five or six of these little birds are thus busily employed, in every possible position, clustered on a bough thickly covered with cones, a very pretty bird picture is produced, worth setting up to illustrate incidents in the life-history of the Siskin. Their expertness in opening the cones is surprising, considering the hemlock-spruce is of Canada, and these birds are European, hence they cannot have an inherited experience. It is said that in Germany, the Siskin is mischievous in the hop-grounds, settling on the bine in great flocks and extracting the seeds of that plant. I have noticed them on the birch-trees, feeding on the seed, which is enclosed in a pendulous catkin-like receptacle."

GREENFINCH. *Ligurinus chloris* (Linnæus).

"Green Grosbeak," "Green Linnet."

Resident, and common in gardens and fields close to the town of Leicester.—I have noticed this bird to be so fond of the seeds of the sunflower, as to come into gardens within a few yards of the house-door, and take but little notice of people close at hand. Few other birds appear to care for these seeds.

The eggs are very variable in size, shape, and colour. Mr. Davenport writes:—"In July, 1883, I obtained a tiny egg of this species from a nest near Ashlands; it was marked with a wreath at the thin end, and was about the size of a Tree-Creeper's egg. This species occasionally lays six eggs."

Sir Arthur Hazlerigg possesses a canary-coloured variety, which he shot at Noseley about 1868.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.

HAWFINCH. *Coccothraustes vulgaris* (Pallas).

"Common Grosbeak."

Resident, generally distributed, more common than formerly, and breeding occasionally.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 67) said:—"One shot at Coleorton, another at Groby." Harley wrote:—"During the winter seasons of 1830-1-2-3, the Hawfinch was abundant, and numbers were shot in many parts of the county," and added:—"The creature appears to be most partial to situations in which the hornbeam prevails, upon the hard seeds of which it feeds."

I received several for the Museum in Jan., 1881, from Cropston, Sapcote,





etc. How common they become in certain seasons may be estimated by the fact that, in the winter of 1883, Elkington had twenty-one brought to him on one day from the vicinity of Ansty, and, during the three years ending 1885, he believes he must have had sixty or seventy. In Nov., 1884, I purchased two specimens, and on 23rd Feb., 1885, Mr. F. Rowley, my assistant, purchased two others. All were males, and were from the vicinity of Groby and Ansty. Mr. Ingram, who informs me that it is "common in the Belvoir Woods, haunting large yew-trees," wrote, on 14th Jan., 1886:—"Just now the Hawfinch is feeding on the yew-berries; the ground beneath some of our large trees is covered with the shells of the seeds, the seed itself being extracted." A male Hawfinch in fine plumage was sent to me on 18th April, 1887, by Mr. J. W. Bickley, of Melton Mowbray; it had been picked up dead, having evidently flown against some wire fencing in his garden.

Writing of this species Mr. Ingram says:—"It is shy, builds a slight nest; the young have been taken and reared." A male, female, and five young, in the Museum, were presented by Mr. W. T. Everard, on 26th June, 1867, as having been taken from a nest in his garden at Bardon Hill. On 4th Aug., 1880, a young bird was picked up dead at Gumley, upon which Mr. Macaulay founds his statement ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 37) that "It has bred at Gumley." He also says it nested at Blaby in an apple-tree, but I have no evidence in support of this. Sir George Beaumont, of Coleorton Hall, wrote to Mr. Macaulay on 16th Dec., 1881:—"I have Hawfinches breeding here every year." Mr. F. Firr informs me that, in 1882 (he believes in July), he took six eggs out of a nest built in a hawthorn-tree near the Loughborough Grammar School; he is quite sure it was the nest of a Hawfinch, as he saw the bird. Unfortunately the eggs were destroyed by a Mouse, and so are not now in existence; the circumstance must therefore be taken for what it is worth. Mr. T. A. Macaulay reports the breeding of the Hawfinch in Mr. Farnham's grounds, at Quorndon, during the summer of 1888.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, generally distributed, and more common than formerly.—It has been seen at Exton, and Mr. R. Tryon has seen it at Oakham. Mr. Horn reports that a nest with eggs was taken at Bisbrook in 1885, and the Earl of Gainsborough records ('Zool.', 1888, p. 305):—"On May 24th, I had the good fortune to find two Hawfinches' nests, both in apple-trees, and each containing five eggs; the eggs in one nest were of the smaller and rounder type, with the markings more scattered over the whole surface, and the black spots very dark and bright. In the other nest they were of the more ordinary type, longer and more pointed, with the dull, dusky, and streaky marks peculiar to this egg more evident, and the black spots fewer, and more at the larger end." Mr. R. G. Gwatkin, of Potterne, in a letter to me, supplements this by saying "I saw the birds, both on the nests and afterwards."



HOUSE-SPARROW. *Passer domesticus* (Linnæus).

"Thack (or Thatch)-Sparrow."

Resident, and far too common, breeding everywhere; its playful little ways, however, endear it to the agriculturist and floriculturist, for, to the former it cannot fail to be a source of great gratification that his seeds do not come up in an over-crowded condition, and the pleasurable emotions which it calls into being in the breast of the latter, when he is saved the trouble of taking cuttings of his choice carnations, or of saving the flowers of his crocuses, can be better imagined than described; now and then, however, it condescends to pick half-a-dozen or so *Aphides* from the rose-trees—together with the buds,—and, to the plumber, from its habit of blocking up the spouts, it is a source of never-failing joy and profit. Our American cousins have, I believe, by this time, found out that the English Sparrow, "quite English, you know," imported at so much trouble and expense many years ago, has fully repaid them for their care, by finding employment for many hundreds of prominent citizens, who might otherwise have been walking about with their hands in their pockets.

Subject to much variation of colour.—A white one was seen about Melton in 1884. It nested, and amongst the brood was one somewhat resembling the parent. The late Mr. Widdowson had a hen bird of this species dusky all over, with the margins of the primaries and secondaries dark brown, the chest and under parts being of a sooty tint. This was presented to the Museum by his widow, in 1888. Between Aylestone and Knighton, on 12th Jan., 1884, I shot a male with bright chestnut wings and back, and dark chestnut throat. Another, which I shot near the Cattle-market, Aylestone Road, on 7th Feb., 1884, had the wings white, each feather margined with pale chestnut; upper wing-coverts and back light chestnut; head paler than ordinary; under parts greyish-white, as if faded; tail, a dull white. Apparently it was a male, but dissection shewed that it might be a barren female assuming other plumage.

Mr. R. Hazlewood recorded in the 'Leicester Chronicle and Mercury' of the 3rd Oct., 1885, that, some years before, he remembered seeing, at Lindridge House, several white Sparrows, and that the then resident, a Captain Morton, "was very choice of them, and would not have them caught or destroyed." He also reported a snuff-coloured one in his own possession. The Museum possesses two purely-white examples, but unfortunately there is no record of date nor locality. Mr. Davenport writes me that he saw a beautiful pied variety at Thurnby, in the winter of 1886-7. Harriman, Sexton of S. Margaret's Church, informed me that he had repeatedly seen a white Sparrow about the churchyard in Nov., 1887. Two young white Sparrows were shot at Bardon Hill, on 9th July, 1888, by Mr. J. B. Ellis, and presented by him to the Museum. They were yellowish-white, and had pink eyes. One had faint indications of a narrow brown line across the secondaries, and the other had







a very faint subterminal bar upon the tail. The eggs also vary considerably, and Mr. Davenport writes that he took a white egg of this bird at Skeffington, in May, 1880.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I saw a white variety in the possession of Mr. R. Tryon, procured at Oakham about 1883.

TREE-SPARROW. *Passer montanus* (Linnæus).

“Mountain-Sparrow.”

Resident, but sparingly distributed over the woodlands.—Mr. Davenport shot one at Skeffington in Dec., 1876. Mr. H. Ellis shot one at Glenfield on 29th Dec., 1881. The late Mr. R. Widdowson sent me one from Melton Mowbray. I killed one (a female) at Blaby, on 25th March, 1884; and others, consorting with Chaffinches and Greenfinches, in snowy weather, at Knighton, on 14th Jan., 1885.

Harley found the nest in holes in various trees, “especially in those made by the Green Woodpecker”; he also met with it placed immediately beneath that of the Magpie and Rook, and sometimes about barns and outbuildings; in which statement he is corroborated by Mr. Davenport, who adds the well-known fact, that nine-tenths of the eggs attributed to the Tree-Sparrow are those of the common House-Sparrow.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, but sparingly distributed over the woodlands.—Mr. Horn has found nests in holes of trees about Uppingham.

CHAFFINCH. *Fringilla cælebs*, Linnæus.

“Pink” or “Spink” (no doubt from its note), “Pye-Finch,” “Pie-Finch” (*i.e.* Pied Finch).

Resident and common, breeding in gardens and plantations close to the town of Leicester.—With regard to the flocking of hen Chaffinches in the autumn, as narrated by Gilbert White, Harley believed that writer to be in error, as the birds might be immature individuals of the year, and not females, as he himself had observed. I have shot many, and found the apparent females to be, as noted above, immature specimens of both sexes. Mr. Ingram writes from Belvoir that they flock there “in thousands, and are useful in destroying the seeds of weeds.”

Mr. G. H. Storer writes:—“In my aviary I have a pair of Chaffinches. One summer morning I picked up a young Sparrow which had fallen from the nest, and, although fairly feathered, was unable to fly. I placed it in a cage in which were about a dozen other birds, including the Chaffinches. No notice was taken of the little stranger for a time, except by the Reed Bunting, who tried, in a half-hearted sort of way, to play the bully, by opening his beak and making a dead set at the intruder, until the Sparrow began to cry out

for food, when I perceived the hen Chaffinch approach the seed-box, and, taking a few seeds in her bill, begin to feed the youngster. After a while the male bird joined her, and together they attended to the stranger until it was able to look after itself. The behaviour of the male bird was most amusing. He disdained to feed the Sparrow directly himself, but was not averse to doing it by proxy, so he carried his seeds to the hen, and she placed them in the mouth of their mutual *protégé*." (Recorded also in 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' Jan., 1889, p. 25.)

Harley considered that, in the vicinity of Deer-parks, the Chaffinch finished its nest in a more beautiful manner than ordinarily, and instances one which he took in Garendon Park, writing that "it was most interesting to remark with what skill and industry the Chaffinch had inwrought the pale, buff, and white hairs of the Fallow-Deer and some other species of herbivorous mammalia, with other kinds of substances, in the formation of the nest in question." The eggs vary: Mr. Davenport notes "an extraordinary, pale-green, elongated egg, taken at Skeffington in May, 1879," also a clutch of five, shaped like a Snipe's and of the colour of a Starling's eggs, and two clutches of a delicate pale-blue, entirely unspotted; and Mr. W. A. Vice presented to the Museum, on 9th May, 1885, a nest containing five eggs of this description, taken by him at Blaby.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.—Mr. Horn possesses a nest ornamented with fragments of rotten wood instead of with lichen.

BRAMBLING. *Fringilla montifringilla*, Linnæus.

"Mountain-Finch," "French Pye or Pie (*i.e.* Pied)-Finch."

A winter visitant, sparingly distributed, and, though often found in flocks, does not remain to breed in Britain.—Mr. Babington wrote in 1842 (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 67):—"Several shot twenty years ago at Swannington, by Mr. Grundy, who kept a wounded bird for some time in a cage. It lost all its yellow and red plumage, and turned brown, after being fed on hemp-seed." He further stated that the species had since been killed near Glenfield, and that, in Jan., 1841, during a long snow, several were shot at Castle Donington; also that in Jan., 1842, ten or twelve were shot near Coleorton. Harley wrote:—"During the winter of 1843-4 it was very abundant, and great numbers were shot in various parts of the county. It appeared again in the winter of 1854-5." The Museum Donation-book records one presented on 29th March, 1860, from Barkby Thorpe. Mr. Davenport obtained one at Skeffington in Dec., 1880. In the winter of 1884 they were unusually numerous in Leicestershire, and I received specimens in February and March from Thornton Reservoir, Saddington, and from a field on the Groby Road where corn was being winnowed, and to which the Bramblings resorted in hundreds. Mr. W. A. Evans shot five at two shots (three males and two females), at New Parks, on 1st March, 1886, and presented





one male and two females to the Museum; they were consorting with Greenfinches and Chaffinches. Mr. A. K. Perkins shot one at Laughton on 10th Jan., 1887, and presented it to the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—A winter visitant, sparingly distributed, though sometimes found in flocks.—Mr. Horn reports specimens from Ayston and Uppingham, but has no record of dates.

LINNET. *Linota cannabina* (Linnæus).

“Brown-Linnet,” “Goss (*i.e.* Gorse)-Linnet.”

Resident, and generally distributed.

Harley occasionally found a nest on the lateral branch of an elm, some six or eight feet from the ground. I found a nest, on 13th June, 1884, containing five eggs (now in the Museum), built in a magnolia trained on the wall of Belvoir Castle.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed.

LESSER REDPOLL. *Linota rufescens* (Vieillot).

“Pea-Linnet,” “Redcap.”

Resident, and sparingly distributed.

Harley met with its nest and eggs in North Leicestershire, in a rough place known at that time by the name of “Leake Lings.” The nest was fixed in a thick gorse-bush five or six feet from the ground; it was more compact than the nest of the Common Linnet, smaller, and more elegantly woven. He also met with its nest at Bardon. Mr. Davenport found a nest with three eggs, in May, 1883, at Ashlands, and wrote, Dec., 1887:—“Has built at Ashlands in July, three years running.” According to the late Mr. R. Widdowson, it often breeds about Melton. In June, 1883, a nest containing three eggs was found at Kibworth, by Master Stuart Macaulay, built on the end of a branch of an elm-tree, and was presented to the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and sparingly distributed, but, as Lord Gainsborough remarks, “probably often escapes observation.” No report, as yet, of its nesting, although Mr. Horn saw birds during the breeding season of 1886.

TWITE. *Linota flavirostris* (Linnæus).

“Mountain-Linnet.”

A winter visitant, apparently of rare occurrence, although Harley wrote:—“The Mountain-Linnet appears here, at times, at the close of autumn. The little migrant seems partial to wild tracts in which the thistle prevails. We occasionally meet with it in small flocks, its associates being the Brown Linnet



and Gold-Finch. We think it does not nestle with us, but merely performs an annual, irregular, inland migration." I have no other note of this bird, save that the stuffers, Elkington and Turner, say they have received a few specimens from the vicinity of Leicester. As I have not myself examined any specimens, however, I cannot vouch for their accuracy, and should consider it a rare bird, nor have I any report of its breeding.

#### SUB-FAMILY *LOXIINÆ*.

#### BULLFINCH. *Pyrrhula europæa* (Vieillot).

Resident, but unevenly distributed.

Harley remarked that, although the nest of the Bullfinch is said by many writers to be built generally in hawthorn-hedgerows, thick bushes, and similar places, he had met with it within some of our coniferous shrubs. He also found a nest placed upon a lateral branch of a silver spruce fir in one of the groups of plantations of Charnwood Forest, and several times since the year 1825 he had met with it in like situations. In this he is quite correct, for at Belvoir I have seen its nest in such places, and the Museum possesses one from thence which was built in the midst of a flowering rhododendron—one beautiful object within another. Harley appears to have considered that it fed, at times, on the berries of the nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*). Mr. Davenport finds its nest and eggs every year, and says that it occasionally lays six eggs; and at Belvoir, where it is common, building in rhododendron and other bushes and trees, I have procured nests and eggs for the Museum. Two clutches of eggs from thence are very dissimilar in shape, one being long, pointed, and spotted at the large end only, the other short, obtuse, and blotched irregularly over the whole surface, but principally at the larger end.

I bought a melanic variety, in 1884, for the Museum,—a cage bird evidently fed on hemp-seed.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.

#### PARROT CROSSBILL. *Loxia pityopsittacus* (Bechstein).

A rare visitor to Britain, not remaining to breed.—Harley wrote:—"On the authority of Mr. Bickley, of Melton Mowbray, it appears the Parrot Crossbill made a visit to Leicestershire in 1849." With reference to this statement, the late Mr. R. Widdowson wrote me:—"A pair of Parrot Crossbills, killed close to Melton, are in the Bickley collection." Unfortunately, however, as before remarked, with two exceptions mentioned hereafter, the specimens in the Bickley collection are unlabelled.

#### CROSSBILL. *Loxia curvirostra*, Linnæus.

An irregular and uncertain visitant from autumn to early spring, but has bred in the county.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 67) said:—"In great





flocks in the winter of 1839, splitting the fir-cones at 'The Oaks,' near Charnwood Heath; and in some tall firs at Swannington. They were very tame. I brought down several at one shot." Harley recorded that "during the winter months of 1839-40, the Crossbill came to us in large flocks, and the birds were captured in most parts of the Midland counties in great numbers." In February, 1854, Crossbills visited us in small flocks, and, on the 20th, Harley examined a specimen which had its bill and feet daubed over with a substance resembling Venice turpentine in appearance, and probably derived from the cones of the fir. The late Mr. Widdowson's diary records:—"Crossbill killed, Mr. Gillett, 11th April, 1868," and Mr. Macaulay reports having seen one at Gumley, in 1881, on 11th August—an unusual date at which to meet with it.

Harley recorded for the first time its nidification in Leicestershire, in the summer of 1839. A pair of Crossbills took up their residence in a fir-plantation surrounding the northernmost part of Bradgate Park, not far from a farmhouse known as "Hall Gates." The nest was fixed on the branch of a thick fir, some twelve or fourteen feet from the ground. The young were fledged, and disappeared with their parents.

In RUTLAND.—A rare visitant.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it was observed at Normanton, in 1840, by Mr. J. Montague; at Ryhall, in 1873, by Miss M. Johnson; and at Carlby by the Rev. R. Hurt.

#### SUB-FAMILY EMBERIZINÆ.

CORN-BUNTING. *Emberiza miliaria*, Linnæus.

"Common Bunting," "Bunting-Lark," "Writing-Lark" (as also the following species, in allusion to the scrawled and blotched appearance of their eggs).

Resident, but sparingly distributed. More often seen, perhaps, in the winter months, especially near farm buildings, consorting with Sparrows and other birds.—Harley remarks upon a well-known trait of this bird, viz., that at certain seasons of the year it flies with its legs dangling.

The Rev. H. Parry kindly brought me a nest and two eggs from Tugby, on 2nd June, 1888.

Turner informed me of a pied variety which he saw, caught in this county about the year 1880-1.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, but sparingly distributed.—Mr. Horn says that they appear to remain upon the arable land until the breeding season, when a partial migration takes place, about the 1st June, and they spread themselves over the country. He considers it a late breeder, as, in 1886, he did not find the eggs until the 2nd July.

YELLOW HAMMER.\* *Emberiza citrinella*, Linnæus.

"Yellow Bunting," "Writing-Lark," "Goldfinch" about Thringstone (see Appendix 'Potter,' p. 67).

Resident and common in both counties.

CIRL-BUNTING. *Emberiza cirrus*, Linnæus.

Rare.—Has occurred but once, on the authority of Harley, who, writing between 1840-55, said that he had met with it in company with the Yellow Bunting, in the lordship of Thurmaston.

ORTOLAN-BUNTING. *Emberiza hortulana*, Linnæus.

A rare winter visitant.—I insert this on the authority of the late Mr. R. Widdowson, who knew of two "killed with Larks; both young" (presumably near Melton Mowbray).

REED-BUNTING.† *Emberiza schœniclus*, Linnæus.

"Black-cap" ('Leicestershire Proverbs'), "Reed-Sparrow."

Resident, and generally distributed; much scarcer, however, in winter than in spring, when accessions to the residents arrive.

I have found it breeding in the Castle reed-bed, Leicester, as well as at Aylestone, and have seen flights of immature birds at Saddington, Bosworth, etc. This bird occasionally breeds away from water: Mr. Davenport records a nest of five eggs, built in a spinney at Ashlands, 24th May, 1883; and, on 2nd June, 1885, I had one brought to me, containing four eggs, from a roadside hedge at Aylestone.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed, as in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn says he found a nest, in June, 1887, on the banks of the river Eye, near Stoke Dry.

SNOW-BUNTING. *Plectrophanes nivalis* (Linnæus).

"Snow-Lark."

A rare winter visitant, not breeding in England, and rarely in parts of Scotland.—Mr. Babington wrote, in 1842 (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 67):—"A specimen shot on the rocks near Whitwick four or five years ago, in the transition from the white to the tawny plumage." Mr. J. S. Ellis tells me that, when living at Glenfield Lodge, he remembers a small party of four or five being seen there, probably about 1854 or 1855. Turner states that a large flock

\* More correctly "Yellow Ammer," Ammer meaning Bunting. Another instance in which we have introduced an erroneous H, in a cockneyfied manner, is to be found in the name of the "Prince of Denmark," which should really be written "Amlet" = Madman.

† This bird is often called in error the "Black-headed Bunting," a term properly applied to *E. melanocephala*, a doubtful British bird, which is yellow-breasted, with a black head.







was seen by W. Bond at the Abbey Meadow some time about 1870. Mr. Macaulay records ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 10) that a specimen was killed at Laughton (probably about 1865), and is now in the possession of the Rev. A. Matthews, and that four others were shot at Burton Overy, during severe frost, in Feb., 1881. I saw a beautiful specimen, in the hands of a bird-stuffer, shot in Braunstone Lane by Mr. T. H. Ashby, 7th Nov., 1885, and as there are some remarkable circumstances attending its history, it may be as well to publish them here. The original specimen, which I saw in the flesh, was stolen from the shop of the man who had it, and who, to make good the loss, substituted for it an American example of the same species. It was afterwards sold to another bird-stuffer for one penny; and he, knowing its history, had the audacity to offer it to me for three shillings, and this after I had tried to purchase it for the Museum, and the owner had positively declined to part with it. Where the local specimen is now I do not know, but it is highly improbable that it is in the possession of Mr. Ashby. Such are the tricks played upon ornithologists, and it is thus that many of the notes are manufactured which appear in the various Natural History periodicals.

In RUTLAND.—A rare winter visitant.—I am informed that one was seen by Lady Gainsborough at Cottesmore, in 1883.

## SECTION OSCINES-CULTRIHOSTRES.

### FAMILY STURNIDÆ.

STARLING. *Sturnus vulgaris*, Linnæus.

"Shepster," "Stare," "Starnel."

Resident and common; breeding even in the town of Leicester.—Harley truthfully remarks that no bird appears to enjoy a bath more than the Starling. I may be mistaken, but it appears to me to have become more companionable, drawing nearer to Man of late years; and although I consider this to be one of the most valuable of all the insectivorous birds, from the rapidity with which it clears lawns, grass-plots, etc., from noxious insects, yet there is no denying the fact that it takes toll, to an alarming extent, of the berries of some of our trees, especially the mountain-ash or rowan, to which it appears particularly partial.

In the spring, I have, to my dismay, seen it, with great quickness, cut off the leaves of various plants such as polemoniums, pinks, etc., seeming to prefer a long leaf, although, singularly enough, it did not appear to care for the leaves of the narcissi, which, I should have thought, would have suited it much better for nest-building. I saw many of these birds nesting in boxes placed in trees opposite Mr. W. Whitaker's hall-door at Wistow, in May, 1885.

One box which was tenanted was not more than ten feet from the ground. It has also bred in boxes fixed at the top of my house overlooking the main thoroughfare at Aylestone. Several pairs inspected the boxes, and one pair eventually took up their residence therein, built, and brought off their young, in the summer of 1887. In 1888, they built back and front, quite close to both the doorways; and one splendid male, whilst singing to his partner, elaborated a series of beautiful flute-like notes, which, though somewhat resembling those of the Blackbird, were yet much more like those of the Golden Oriole. Now and then he would twitter like a Swallow, and, like the remainder of his fellows, would sit and sing, inwardly, a sibilant and pleasing strain. Whilst getting this ready for the press (autumn, 1888, and Jan., 1889) this bird still cheers us with his song, which has even improved in quality since the above was written.

Mr. G. H. Storer informs me that a friend of his possessed a Starling which, although untrained, imitated the crowing of the farm-yard Cock to such perfection that he frequently set all the roosters around crowing in defiance, and appeared to obtain much satisfaction from this trick! (Noted also in 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' Jan., 1889, p. 27).

Mr. Davenport writes me that, when a boy, he took thirty-two eggs in the course of a summer, from a hole in a wall where a pair of Starlings were nesting.

It is subject to much variety.—Mr. Davenport records a white one seen by him at Skeffington in September, 1878. That varieties will mate with normally-plumaged specimens was proved at Kibworth, from whence Mr. Macaulay procured and forwarded to me, on 4th June, 1887, a family party of male, female, and three young, taken from a nest built under the eaves of a cottage in the village. The young and the male bird were of the normal type, but the female was a curious variety. The wings and tail were of a light brownish-drab shewing in certain lights somewhat of an isabelline tint, but all the head, breast, and back were of a dusky greyish-brown, the ochreous tips of the mantle and wing-covert feathers shewing dimly through the all-pervading grey,—not at all a pretty bird, and irresistibly reminding one of an ancient and faded stuffed specimen, one which had been exposed for a number of years to a strong light. I saw the birds when alive, and the contrast between the almost black male and the female, which looked nearly white or cream-coloured when flying to and from the nest, was very marked. Pinchen told me that his son, Robert Pinchen, with other people, repeatedly observed a cream-coloured Starling close to the Spinney-hill Park, during the summer of 1887. It had also been noticed in a flock the previous autumn.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.—Mr. Horn informs me that he has taken some eggs almost white, and not easily distinguished from those of the Green Woodpecker. Mr. R. Tryon informed me that, about 1883, he saw a white





Starling for a fortnight, in a large flock of others, but that he lost sight of it at a time when he heard one was shot at Melton.

ROSE-COLOURED PASTOR. *Pastor roseus* (Linnæus).

This species is inserted on the authority of Mr. Macaulay, who states ('Mid Nat.,' 1882, p. 63) that one was seen near Foxton, about 1870, by the late Rev. H. Matthews. It was in the company of a flock of Starlings. Since then, Turner has told me that a man named Collins, now deceased, received a specimen in the flesh from Enderby, about 1870-75.

## FAMILY CORVIDÆ.

JAY. *Garrulus glandarius* (Linnæus).

Resident, and generally distributed.—Mr. Davenport finds their nests and eggs every year, and, on 27th May, 1887, he found a nest containing four eggs of a beautiful pink variety, which he considers a great rarity.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed.

MAGPIE. *Pica rustica* (Scopoli).

Resident, and generally distributed.—This saucy and mischievous Crow has been reported to me as pecking out the eyes of Lambs; and no doubt this may be true, as, in common with all the Corvidæ, the Magpie has a hankering for animal food. When shooting in the thick woods at Billesdon Coplow, 17th Nov., 1887, we came across a flock of twenty or so, congregated about a dead Sheep.

Harley recorded that he had observed the nest of the Magpie in hedges, not more than six feet from the ground, and, as illustrative of the confidence reposed in Man by this bird (or rather, I should suppose, its audacity), he referred to a nest "placed in the fork of a low ash, nearly opposite the first toll-gate on the Aylestone Road, in the spring of 1845." He also wrote:—"We remember seeing the nest of the Magpie fixed within the branches of a large elm, some years ago, standing in the very centre of a market-town," but does not say if this was in Leicestershire. Mr. Davenport remarks:—"A Magpie begins to build, say, at the end of March, and takes about a month to complete her nest; let the eggs be taken, one week will suffice for the rearing of a second nest." He further records, however, that in 1885, a Magpie began to build so early as the 1st March.

Mr. J. Lingham Lees, of Hinckley, writes me that a tame Magpie, which had been in the possession of his family for nearly ten years, laid two eggs in 1886, and three in 1887, but has since been unfortunately killed by a Rat.

Subject to variation of colouring.—I recorded in the 'Zoologist,' 1886, p. 17:—"Mr. J. W. Whitaker, of Mansfield, Notts, writes me that his brother, Mr. W. Whitaker, of Wistow Grange, shot a cream-coloured variety in 1880, and



threw it away as of no value!" This, the latter gentleman has since written me, is a mistake. A snuff-coloured variety, purchased by Mr. J. W. Whitaker in 1882, was said by the man who sold it to have been taken at Stoughton.

Mr. Davenport writes:—"A pure white Magpie frequented the neighbourhood of Shearsby for a long time in the winter of 1881-2, and was noticed by many people hunting with Sir Bache Cunard's Hounds."

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed.—Mr. Horn writes:—"On the 29th April, 1885, we took three nests containing seven, six, and six eggs respectively, six being the usual number. I have seen as many as fifteen Magpies together."

JACKDAW. *Corvus monedula*, Linnæus.

Resident and common, breeding in old steeples, etc., in the town of Leicester.

I have especially noticed them at S. Margaret's Church, where, the sexton informed me, they deposited their sticks in such numbers upon the upper steps of the belfry, as to completely block up the passage, and necessitate their being carted away. Harley remarked that the Jackdaw built year after year in the ancient stables near the ruins at Bradgate Park, and he once observed a pair nesting in the chimney of a small cottage standing beside the lane leading from Newtown Linford to Ulverscroft. According to Mr. Ingram, the Jackdaw harries Blackbirds' nests, and has no scruple in taking the callow young. Mr. Davenport reports a variety of the eggs taken by him in Launde Wood in 1881.

Mr. Macaulay brought me a curious variety shot by the keeper at Bradgate Park, on 25th May, 1888. The lower parts of the primaries of each wing were umber-brown, becoming lighter, or more drab-like, towards the tips. The lower parts of the secondaries were similar, as also that part which corresponds with the alar bar in most birds. Five, possibly six, feathers—one being shot away—in the tail were deep umber-brown. The outer edges of each feather were, in every case, the lightest, the remainder being of the normal type. The scheme was, however, by no means regular in either wings or tail, although the pattern of each wing was almost exactly like its fellow, and it was rather oddly, than well, or regularly, marked. The gradual fading off from the glossy greenish-blue tint to brown was curious, and gave to the brown somewhat of a purple hue.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common, breeding, so Mr. Horn informs me, in Uppingham Church-steeple.

CARRION-CROW.\* *Corvus corone*, Linnæus.

Resident, generally distributed, but not so common as formerly.—Harley stated that, on the large grass-lands in the southern division of the county, where game was much less cared for than in other districts, the Carrion-Crow was certainly more abundant. Mr. S. Shackelford wrote me:—"I was driving

\* See Note on next page.







in May, 1884, along the highway in Knaptoft Parish, when I saw a Crow about two hundred yards in front on the roadside, which seemed to me, at that distance, to be fighting with another, but as I drove within fifteen yards of it, I was astonished to find it trying to kill a Mole, and on my stopping, it collared the animal with its beak, flew over the hedge with it, and then commenced again."

Mr. Davenport writes:—"A very small, dark-green egg was taken (from a nest containing one other) by me near Rolleston in April, 1882; a precisely similar egg in every respect was taken at the same place in April, 1883, from a nest containing four others. Both eggs are in my collection. The old birds had frequented the neighbourhood during the intervening winter." He further records a third, also similar, taken on 13th April, 1885.

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and generally distributed.—Mr. Horn appears to find it most abundant in the woods and water-meadows near Uppingham, having taken, in April, 1886, between thirty and forty eggs in clutches of four, five, and six.

HOODED CROW.\* *Corvus cornix*, Linnaeus.

"Grey Crow," "Grey-backed Crow," "Royston Crow," "Saddle-backed Crow."

A regular winter visitant, sparingly distributed, and not remaining to breed.—Mentioned by Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68) as having been seen near Charnwood Heath, and he himself had seen specimens said to have been killed near Leicester. Harley noted its first appearance at various dates, commencing 25th Oct., and extending over a period of fourteen days, and remarked that, from then until about 21st March, it might be observed on our uplands and wilds, its range being chiefly limited to the forest of Charnwood and the surrounding district. Mr. Ingram writes:—"Five or six pairs generally visit Belvoir every November, remaining until spring; often near the kennels, the smell of flesh attracting them." The late Mr. Widdowson noted the appearance of this bird in the vicinity of Melton nearly every winter. Turner reports one shot in the Abbey meadow about 1870; and a specimen, which I saw in the possession of the once celebrated prize-fighter, Joseph ("Mickey") Bent, was said to have been shot by a Mr. Large, near Melton Mowbray, somewhere about the year 1873. Mr. Macaulay records one ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 64) obtained at Skeffington in 1875, and further informs me of one seen by him at Saddington Reservoir on 7th Jan., 1885. I purchased one for the Museum, obtained from Rothley Plain on 2nd Feb., 1881, and another,

\* Although both of these birds are now considered as one and the same, and not worthy of separate specific rank (see Yarrell, Vol. II., pp. 274—288, and other works, as also the illustrative case of mounted specimens in all stages of variation exhibited in the entrance-hall, Natural History Museum, South Kensington), yet I have deemed it advisable to keep them separate in this work, for obvious reasons.

also in the flesh, on 3rd Jan., 1882, shot close to Leicester. Mr. Ellis says that he sees a pair or two nearly every winter; and I myself, when driving near Bradgate, saw two on 24th Feb., 1882, sitting on an old tree. C. Adcock informs me that he mounted one, which had been caught in a trap at Bradgate in 1883. Elkington tells me that he has, in past years, received several from Swithland. The 'Leicester Chronicle and Mercury' of 24th Oct., 1885, records that a Mr. Bevin, of Dunton Bassett, found a wounded bird there, on 16th Oct., 1885. Since then it appears to have been unusually common. I purchased a male, shot on Cropston Road, 31st Oct., 1885, the stomach of which contained large quantities of the elytra of various Beetles, and some few uninjured small Snails. Another (a female) was shot at Cossington on 6th Nov., 1885, and presented to the Museum by Mr. Thomas Woodcock, of Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake; five others had been seen there on the 5th. One was shot at Narborough by Mr. Everard about the same time. Mr. Davenport shot one at Skeffington Vale, in Dec., 1880, and reports three seen at Skeffington on the 5th Dec., 1885. The Rev. A. Matthews reports having seen two at Gumley. Mr. W. A. Evans saw one at Kirby Muxloe, on 28th Nov., 1885. Mr. H. W. Roberts saw one at Sheet Hedges, Bradgate, on 2nd Feb., 1887. The Rev. G. D. Armitage told me that he saw one at Broughton Astley, in 1887.

In RUTLAND.—A regular winter visitant, sparingly distributed, and not remaining to breed.—Mr. Horn shot a specimen at Uppingham, on 5th Dec., 1884, and writes that it is occasionally numerous in the Welland Valley, where sometimes, as in 1885, he has seen so many as a dozen together.

ROOK. *Corvus frugilegus*, Linnæus.

Resident and common; breeding in "rookeries" so close to the town of Leicester as Stoneygate and Knighton, and, until its demolition, in 1887, at Westcotes.—Harley appears to have considered that most of the Rooks bred immediately around Leicester congregated and rested for the night, during the autumn and winter, in "Sheet Hedges" Wood, opposite the village of Ansty. He also remarked upon the hardships to which this species is exposed during seasons of continued drought, such as the summer of 1826, when numbers perished in the fields for want of food.

The eggs vary considerably in size. Two, taken out of a nest at Stoughton, were presented to the Museum on 24th April, 1886, by Master Clement A. Turner, one of them being of normal size, the other about the size of a Sparrow's egg.

This bird is subject to much variety. The Museum Donation-book records, under date 13th June, 1850, a rather uncommon variety, "of a pale brown colour, shot at Stoneygate"; and, under date 25th May, 1885, a pied specimen from Gopsall; and one with white wings, from Belvoir, was presented on 24th





June, 1880, by Mr. Theodore Walker. I saw an immature bird, shot at Wistow Park, 20th May, 1885, the beak of which was yellowish-white, claws white, several of the toes barred with white, part of the head and chin white, as also several of the primaries and secondaries.

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common, and, according to Mr. Horn, breeds in large numbers in Wardley Wood.

RAVEN. *Corvus corax*, Linnæus.

Has not occurred for years.—Mr. Babington, writing in 1842 (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 67), said:—“Generally to be seen on Sharpley a few years since; still in Bradgate Park, as I learn from Mr. Bloxam,” but Harley stated that the late Mr. Adams assured him that the Raven had entirely deserted Bradgate Park, and that the date of its occurrence at Sharpley Rocks was 26th Oct., 1848. Mr. Macaulay reports one (‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1882, p. 64) shot at Saddington, many years since, by Mr. Johnson, whilst it was feeding on a portion of a Sheep that had been hung up in a plantation; and another at Rothley in 1881. This last is, however, an error, Mr. Macaulay’s informant being incompetent to distinguish a Raven from a Carrion-Crow. Messrs. C. and T. Adcock wrote me in 1888:—“Our grandfather, George Evans, told us that this bird used to breed regularly in Bradgate Park, and that when he was a boy (sixty-five years ago) he took the young and reared them, and on one occasion sold one to the old ‘Three Crowns Inn’ at the corner of Horsefair Street,” and Harley stated that a Raven reared its young at Garendon in 1825, which would bring it to about the same date.

In RUTLAND.—Has not occurred for years. — Lord Gainsborough reports that Mr. J. Montague recorded it at Normanton in 1840, and the late Mr. Widdowson wrote me that Mr. John Brown, of Oakham, had one or two taken out of a nest at Cottesmore “Park” (? Wood) some years ago,—an indefinite date, which probably refers back to about the time of Mr. Montague’s note.

## SECTION OSCINES-SCUTELLIPLANTARES.

### FAMILY ALAUDIDÆ.

SKY-LARK. *Alauda arvensis*, Linnæus.

Resident and common; breeding in fields close to the town of Leicester. Packs in flocks of many hundreds in winter, but, in severe seasons, appears to leave the Midlands, probably withdrawing farther south.

Mr. Davenport writes:—“Nests as early as the middle of March.”

The Museum Donation-book records a black variety from Belgrave, 31st March, 1860 (probably fed on hemp seed).

In RUTLAND.—Resident and common.



WOOD-LARK. *Alauda arborea*, Linnæus.

I have no knowledge of this bird save that furnished by Harley, who said that it appears to be a permanent resident, but is seldom met with except in the more retired woodlands. "Around Newtown Linford, Groby, and neighbouring districts the Wood Lark occurs, but even in such places it is not abundant."

He further wrote:—"It nestles with us, and builds on the ground in corn-fields, and rough places near the sides of thick woods and plantations. Never congregates in the winter months, like the Sky-Lark, but remains solitary."

In RUTLAND.—No report save that furnished by the Earl of Gainsborough, who tells me that Mr. J. Cordeaux saw one flying near Exton in 1888.

## ORDER PICARIÆ.

### SUB-ORDER CYPSELI.

#### FAMILY CYPSELIDÆ.

SWIFT. *Cypselus apus* (Linnæus).

"Devilin," "Jack Squealer."

A summer migrant—nearly the last to arrive and the first to leave—commonly distributed, and breeding.—Harley recorded that, in 1842, the Swift appeared on the 6th May, and withdrew on the 8th Sept., and that, on 16th Aug., 1848, during cold and stormy weather, the Swifts withdrew, leaving not a single individual of the species where, only a few days before, they were abundant; but on the 24th, 25th, and 26th, numbers returned to his own parish and to a small village hard by. During the cold weather of the spring of 1886, a correspondent wrote to one of the Leicester papers, under date 15th May:—"As an instance of the bitterly cold and wet weather which has prevailed on several days during the present week, a friend of mine informs me his brother-in-law, who resides in Leicester, saw a man pick up a Swift (*Hirundo apus*) in the street one day this week, and, strange to say, he picked up another in a factory yard himself the following day, both being in an exhausted condition from cold and want of food."

Regarding its nesting Harley wrote:—"With us this species nests in holes in old walls, and in the roofs of dwelling-houses and out-buildings. None of the churches in Leicester with which I am acquainted appear to have a colony of Swifts, the ugly roofs of the buildings not being at all favourable to the habits of the birds."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire, and breeding, amongst other places, in some of the school-houses in the town of Uppingham.







WHITE-BELLIED SWIFT. *Cypselus melba* (Linnæus).

## “Alpine Swift.”

A rare summer migrant.—Has been quoted, in nearly every work since 1839, as having occurred in Leicestershire, on what appears to me insufficient evidence. Harley was responsible for its insertion in the Leicestershire fauna; his exact words being:—“The author, in his remarks on the fauna of the County of Leicester has this note affixed to a fly leaf attached to Jenyn’s manual of British vertebrated animals.—‘1839. September 23rd. Evening Serene. Wind South-west. Time half-past five. Observed a White-bellied Swift cross my path, overhead, near to the Foss lane toll gate. The bird was gliding gently through the soft air in a southerly direction, and at a height of 20 yards from the ground, thus enabling me to identify it very correctly.’”

MacGillivray in his ‘History of British Birds,’ Vol. III. (published in 1840), says, at p. 613 :—“Mr. Harley, of Leicester, informs me that between five and six o’clock of the evening of the 23rd Sept., 1839, he saw an individual of this species, which he says he could not possibly have mistaken, ‘the stretch of the wings having been much too great for the common Swift, probably not less than eighteen or twenty inches. The throat, breast, and belly, down as low as the vent, appeared white. The evening was serene, and the bird was gliding gently along at the height of fifteen or twenty yards. Its motion, in passing overhead, was just like the shoot of the Windhover through the air.’”

Again, at p. 661 of the same volume, in ‘Catalogue of the Land Birds of Leicestershire, by Mr. James Harley’ :—“101. Alpine Swift, *Cypselus alpinus*. On the 23rd Sept., 1839, at half-past five in the evening, I saw, to my astonishment, a bird of this species, gliding along in a southerly direction, at the height of fifteen or twenty yards. From the stretch of its wings and the white colour of its lower parts, it could not be mistaken.”

Even Mr. Harting has—at pp. 200-1 of ‘Our Summer Migrants,’ and at pp. 125-6 of his ‘Handbook of British Birds’—fallen into a slight error, leaving it to be inferred that this identical specimen was *shot* instead of *seen*.

Looking at the three statements dispassionately, it will, I think, be admitted that the first note was doubtless written by Harley on the spur of the moment, at the time, and was not altered in his subsequent MS. contained in a morocco-covered volume bearing this inscription on the fly leaf:—“A synopsis of the vertebrated animals of the County of Leicester, arranged according to the classification of Jenyns, to which is added remarks on the periodical arrival of several summer birds of passage, with notes and observations thereupon. 1840—1855.” In his letter to MacGillivray (p. 613), Harley appears, however, to have polished up his first statement, clenching it, as it were, by mentioning the stretch of the wings, “eighteen or twenty inches,” adding also the particulars as to the whiteness of the under parts. Yet, in his “Synopsis,” he adheres to his first

note on the subject—a somewhat singular occurrence, when it is taken into consideration how very much amplified from his original MS. notes—now in my possession—are the notes in the subsequently fair-copied volume or “Synopsis.”

Whilst acquitting Harley of any wish to make “rarities”—too often the case with county naturalists,—I would ask any ornithologist if he could distinguish one species from the other at a glance, when dashing along as these birds do, and, especially, if he could accurately measure the expanse of the wings at the same time? As Harley never described the plumage of any bird, we do not know if he was aware of the fact that the birds of the year, of the common Swift, differ from the adult by the possession of a large gular patch of white: or of the singular, and, I believe, but little-recognised fact that birds of shining black plumage—Rooks for instance—appear white in certain lights when flying.

Summing up the evidence with regard to the claims of this bird to be considered as one of the Leicestershire avi-fauna, I would say that any one knowing that *seeing*, in bird life, is *not* believing, would unhesitatingly refuse to acknowledge the *Cypselus melba* as “one of us.”

## FAMILY CAPRIMULGIDÆ.

NIGHTJAR. *Caprimulgus europæus*, Linnæus.

“Fern-Owl,” “Goatsucker.”

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and doubtless breeding occasionally. —Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 66) said:—“Rocky heaths about Sharpley, Kite Hill, etc.” Harley recorded it from Bardon, Gopsall, Gracedieu, Martinshaw, and Oakley. He also mentioned the pectinated middle claw of this bird, and appeared to think that it is useful in capturing and retaining its prey, but may it not be used as a comb to rid the *vibrissæ* of the mouth, of the wings of Moths and Beetles which may have become entangled? Harley says he has known examples shot so late as October and November. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote from Melton:—“Very few about here.” Mr. Ingram writes:—“Found every summer in Belvoir Woods, but less numerous than formerly; have not found its eggs.” Mr. T. B. Ellis writes:—“Rare; one or two generally at ‘The Brand.’” The Museum Donation-book records one from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, shot by Mr. H. T. Everard, 2nd Sept., 1874; one from Birstall, 3rd Sept., 1876; and one from Belgrave, 26th May, 1877, the two last shot by Mr. G. Hall. One was killed by Harry Throsby with a catapult, in an orchard at Aylestone, 31st May, 1887. This is the first which has come under my notice during my residence in the county.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—The Earl of Gainsborough writes:—“Reported from Edith Weston, Stretton, Barnsdale, Oakham, and Ridlington.” Mr. Horn informs me that Mr. John McGaw, of Stamford, found a nest with eggs, in 1886, in Ketton Stone Pits.





SUB-ORDER *PICI*.

## FAMILY PICIDÆ.

## SUB-FAMILY PICINÆ.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER. *Dendrocopus major* (Linnæus).

"French Magpie."

Resident, but not common.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68), stated that it "is found in old woods all round the Forest, but is not very common." Harley remarked that, in his day, the species was seldom seen, except in the vicinity of the parks of Beaumanor, Bosworth, Donington, Garendon, and Gopsall. Sir G. Beaumont wrote to Mr. Macaulay that he had seen it at Coleorton. The Rev. A. Matthews got a female bird of this species at Gumley in November, 1864. C. Adcock wrote me :—"The last we had was a female, shot in Rothley parish in the spring of 1881." Mr. Davenport informs me that one was killed at Loddington in 1881, and that he saw a pair in May, 1881, in Loddington Redditch, and one in November, 1883, in Noseley Park. Mr. Ingram writes :—"Occurs in the Belvoir Woods, and breeds occasionally; seen in orchards; a shy bird." The late Mr. Widdowson wrote :—"Occurs most years about neighbourhood of Melton." I bought a mounted specimen (female) in very poor condition, said to have been procured from Ansty in the autumn of 1883. The late Miss Sansome, of the "Narborough Inn," shewed me, in June, 1885, a fine male shot by her father, the late Mr. Wm. Sansome, in the vicinity of Narborough some fifty or sixty years previously. Mr. T. B. Ellis writes :—"Frequents the larger woods; one or two pairs frequent Bardon Wood"; and, as a proof of this, a fine male specimen was shot by the keeper at Bardon Hill on 15th May, 1885, and presented to the Museum by Mr. B. N. Everard. I have an impression that this bird is not quite so rare as formerly, and, indeed, Pinchen tells me that he has received quite a number in late years from various parts of the county, one being from the vicinity of Coalville, in December, 1887, and another (a female) which he shewed me, shot at Bradgate during the first week of April, 1888, by Wesley, the head keeper. Pinchen remarks, however, that the specimens were, almost without exception, females. Mr. A. Langton reports having seen a Great Spotted Woodpecker at Arnesby, early in 1888.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—The Earl of Gainsborough writes :—"Observed at Barnsdale, Exton, and Normanton." Mr. Horn reports that Cooper, bailiff to Sir Henry Fludyer, shot one in Wardley Wood in 1880. Masters wrote me from Burley, 14th Dec., 1888 :—"There are several about here now."

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER. *Dendrocopus minor* (Linnæus).

Resident, but sparingly distributed; probably rarer than the preceding species. Mentioned by Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68) as having occurred near



Groby. Harley observed that, near Leicester, it affected the elms standing on the grounds at Dannett's Hall and Westcotes, and, near the town of Loughborough, was known to haunt the trees at Burleigh Fields; it was also met with at Beaumanor, Croxton, Donington, Garendon, Gopsall, and Market Bosworth. He remarked that this bird descends trees tail foremost in a spiral manner, performing this reversed motion quickly and easily, without jerks. Mr. H. C. Woodcock tells me that he shot a bird of this species at Rearsby, about 1850. I saw a male specimen in the possession of Joseph ("Mickey") Bent, which he informs me was caught at Stretton Hall, somewhere about 1868, by Mr. W. Warren, by means of a net placed over the hole in which it had its nest. The late Mr. Widdowson informed me that a pair frequented Lord Wilton's Park throughout the winter of 1883, but did not remain to breed. It also occurred the same year at Billesdon Coplow, so says Potter, the bird-stuffer, of Billesdon. Elkington told me of one procured at Woodhouse Eaves in 1883, and I purchased from him a young female shot at Humberstone, on 19th Dec., 1885, by Mr. Bright. Mr. Davenport obtained a male in Cold Overton Wood in January, 1884. Pinchen reports two about 1886, one of them being from Groby. C. Adcock writes me that he saw a pair near Wanlip in November, 1887, and remarks that they have a peculiar way of flying and running, with wings and tail wide spread, when chasing each other about the trees. Mr. A. Langton, of Arnesby, reports that this species is not uncommon in that locality. I saw a male specimen in the hands of Pinchen, shot at Bradgate during the first week of April, 1888, by Wesley, the head keeper.

Mr. Macaulay's note-book (see also 'Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 64) records that, in 1878, a pair built in an orchard at Gumley, and hatched off on 26th May, but that the young were destroyed, and the old bird captured and killed by a boy. Mr. Davenport reports it as "building at Rolleston."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough has seen it at Exton and Burley Ponds; Mr. J. Montague at Normanton; and Mr. N. L. Calcraft states that "a few pairs are always to be seen in Rutland, but they do not seem to increase." The Rev. J. B. Reynardson informs me that it haunts the Holywell and Pickworth Woods.

#### GREEN WOODPECKER. *Gecinns viridis* (Linnæus).

"Rain-bird" (from its cry being more frequently heard before, or during, rain), "Rind-tabberer" (or tapper), "Wood-spite" (*i.e.* wood-spit or wood-piercer), "Yaffle."

Resident, and generally distributed.—I have procured specimens from Ansty, Bradgate, Cropston, Kibworth, etc., and a young male was shot so near to Leicester as Wigston Fields, on 17th Oct., 1887, by Mr. J. Waterfield, who presented it to the Museum.

Mr. Davenport writes:—"I found, on May 13th, 1885, a Green Woodpecker's nest at Keythorpe, in a small hole in a tree not three feet from the ground. On





enlarging it (in no very careful manner) I found nothing in it. Passing by on the 18th, to my amazement the bird flew out again; this time there were five eggs; by the 22nd four more were laid; on the 27th, two; and on June 3rd, three; making a total of fourteen!" Writing again on 8th May, 1886, he says:—"The Green Woodpecker that laid fourteen eggs in a nest last year laid one more after I had inspected the nest for the last time; I found it in the hole, addled but intact, on Friday."

According to Harley, a cream-coloured specimen now or formerly in the Leverian Museum "was shot at Belvoir Chase, or rather Croxton Park, the seat of the Duke of Rutland ('Latham's General Synopsis,' 1st Supplement, p. 110)."

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn informs me that Mr. H. W. Betts, of Ketton Grange, found a nest in Witchley Warren Wood, from which he took six eggs, later he took six more, and then five, making a total of seventeen.

#### SUB-FAMILY *IYNGINÆ*.

WRYNECK. *Iynx torquilla*, Linnæus.

"Cuckoo's Mate," "Snake-bird."

A summer migrant, sparingly distributed, and less common than formerly.—Harley wrote:—"It appears nowhere more common than around Foxton. The ash prevails there, and, moreover, ant-hillocks abound to a much greater extent than in any other district known to us."

He further remarked:—"The Wryneck nests with us, breeding in holes in orchard and forest trees." According to Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.,' 1881, p. 255), a pair built in 1881 in a garden at Kibworth, and were not disturbed.

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough writes:—"Observed at Barnsdale, Edith Weston, and Exton." Mr. Horn writes:—"I obtained, in 1886, a clutch of eggs from an orchard tree at Bisbrook, where it nests most years."

#### SUB-ORDER *ANISODACTYLÆ*.

FAMILY *ALCEDINIDÆ*.

KINGFISHER. *Alcedo ispida*, Linnæus.

Resident, but sparingly distributed.—Harley once caught one, in a severe winter, almost unable to fly, from the fact that "its tiny red feet were encased with ice, some pieces of which hung like ear-drops to its claws." Mr. Ingram writes:—"Occasionally seen near the little river Devon and by the Lake. Two

birds dashed against the Rectory window at Bottesford, and were captured and afterwards liberated." Elkington reported several from the vicinity of Leicester during the winter of 1884-5. I have repeatedly observed specimens on the brook at Knighton, and on the Soar at Aylestone.

It has, I believe, bred at Blaby, Bosworth, Bradgate, Desford, Stapleford Park, etc.; and, on 22nd May, 1885, Master George Snoad presented to the Museum four fresh eggs—being part of a clutch of nine,—taken from a hole in a clay-bank by a little pond close to the Aylestone Road, at some distance from the river. The eggs, laid upon fish-bones, were, before being blown, of a delicate pink hue.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn informs me that it builds in the banks of the Eye every year, and that in 1887 he knew of two nests—one near Allextion Mill and the other at Stoke Dry.

## FAMILY UPUPIDÆ.

HOOPOE. *Upupa epops*, Linnæus.

A rare spring and autumn visitant.—The first notice I can find of this bird is contained in a letter from Mr. Sebastian Evans, of South Kensington, to his friend, the late Rev. Churchill Babington, who obligingly handed it to me. He wrote:—"The Hoopoe which was in the possession of T. Cope, Esq., at Osbaston Hall, was shot in 1828, at, I think, Nailstone, which comes just within your district." The catalogue of the contents of the Museum, when handed over by the Literary and Philosophical Society to the Corporation of Leicester on 19th June, 1849, recorded:—"1 *Upupa epops*, shot in Leicestershire." Harley wrote:—"This species has occurred in the county in immature plumage, a fine example having been shot in the lordship of Stapleton on September 15th, 1851." This was presented by him to the Museum, where it is still preserved (1889). He further recorded:—"It is said to have occurred also at Bradgate Park, and near Lutterworth." The Museum Donation-book records the presentation, on 26th June, 1867, by Mr. C. Burdett, of another example (still in existence) "shot in the county of Leicester." I saw, at Elkington's, a very fine one, apparently a male, of a deep buffy-pink and pure white and black, resembling the most richly-coloured South European specimens (of which I have shot many). It had only been that day set up, and was shot at Great Peatling on 11th May, 1883, by Master Hall of that place. Mr. W. A. Vice, M.B., has told me since then that another was in its company.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough writes me:—"One killed in a turnip-field at Tickencote in 1838, by Jakes, keeper to J. Wingfield, Esq., and now in the possession of Miss Wingfield; and one at Burley, in 1880, by C. Masters, keeper to G. Finch, Esq." I have seen a nice specimen in his Lordship's possession, shot at Cottesmore by Mr. Clayton's gardener, on 29th May,







1888. Mr. C. K. Morris, of Oakham, informs me that one was shot at Ketton, on the evening of 30th Aug., 1888, by Mr. H. W. Betts.

SUB-ORDER *COC CYGES*.

FAMILY CUCULIDÆ.

CUCKOO. *Cuculus canorus*, Linnæus.

A summer migrant, generally distributed, and laying its eggs in other birds' nests so close to Leicester as at Aylestone and Knighton. The Rev. A. Matthews wrote in 'The Zoologist,' January, 1885, p. 25, relative to an immature male found on 12th July, apparently killed by flying against a tent-rope in the garden, and he argues therefrom that the bird was migrating during the night. With all deference to my friend's opinion, I would contend that the date is early for migration (a young bird was killed with a stone at "Forest Rock," 8th August, 1882); and, secondly, that there is no evidence that it was not killed in the early morning during ordinary flight, as the late Mr. R. Widdowson wrote to me:—"Last spring (1883) I had four adults brought to me in one week, all killed by flying against windows." Harley observed it, in 1854, so late as the 6th September.

Mr. Macaulay reports:—"April, 1881, Cuckoo in Wagtail's nest at Saddington." Mr. Davenport writes:—"Found the nest of a Sedge-Warbler, containing two eggs, in a small spinney near Ashlands on June 22nd, 1883. Just afterwards a Cuckoo flew and settled on the nest, and remained there quite fifteen minutes, and, when she flew off again, the little nest was quite flattened out, and her egg deposited by the side of the two belonging to the Sedge-Warbler. In 1884 the bird—I assume it to be the same—repaired again to the same little spinney, laid a similarly marked egg in another Sedge-Warbler's nest close to the old spot, and on this occasion the date was May 24. I possess both eggs, and they cannot be told apart. Two more Cuckoo's eggs from the same locality have come into my collection since 1884, and they are precisely similar to the first two I obtained." Mr. Ingram writes:—"Becoming more numerous; the Wagtail, its favourite foster-mother, often rears the young in the precincts of the garden at Belvoir," and John Ryder, lodge-keeper at Belvoir Castle, informed me that, in the spring of 1884, a Cuckoo laid an egg in a Robin's nest built in a bank by the lodge, and the young Cuckoo was reared by the Robins. On 28th June, 1883, I went to see a young Cuckoo in a Hedge-Sparrow's nest, built in some sticks amidst a thick growth of nettles and thistles, not more than twenty yards from the back door of Mr. Wm. Lander's farm-house at Knighton. The young usurper, at my approach, ruffled its feathers and drew back its head, and then darted out its neck with the most threatening gestures, uttering at the same time a sharp hiss; indeed, its actions, though ludicrous

to a degree, were a remarkably good imitation of those of a Snake. I found an unbroken egg of the Hedge-Sparrow just outside the nest, and saw that the foster-mother fed her ugly charge with larvæ, chiefly of Sawflies. The identical group, including the female Hedge-Sparrow, is now in the Museum. Wilson, of Aylestone Mill, found, in July, 1885, a young Cuckoo in a Reed-Warbler's nest by the side of the river, not twenty-five yards from the Aylestone Road tramway. On 6th Aug., 1886, I went to the Borough Asylum to see a young Cuckoo which had been reared by Pied Wagtails (*M. lugubris*), in an "airing-court" used many times during the day by the worst class of patients, who were constantly passing within four feet of the nest, built in ivy on the wall, only a few inches from the ground. About ten yards from the present nest, the same or another pair of Wagtails had built their nest in a precisely similar position, and had, some short time before, brought off four young. Writing to Dr. J. E. M. Finch, M.A., M.D., by whose courtesy I was enabled to see the young Cuckoo, he obligingly furnished me with the following details, at the same time writing me:—"The notes are by one of the patients, but are quite reliable." As this is perhaps the first time that an admitted madman has written upon Natural History, I give the narrative in the writer's own words, *verbatim et literatim*, as a copy for those outside the walls of lunatic establishments, who are not in the habit of giving their dates and facts with such precision and clearness.

#### "THE CUCKOO AND THE WAGTAILS.

I find in my little Journal of the summer before last the following brief notes at the accompanying dates.

1886.

July 23, Friday—young cuckoo in wagtail's nest.

July 30 ——— cuckoo caged.

Aug. 4 ——— cuckoo photographed.

Aug. 21, Saturday—cuckoo died.

Details may now be supplied from memory to each of these particulars.

(1).

"Our attention was drawn to the spot where there had already been a nest of young wagtails that summer. This was a few inches from the ground in a fork of the ivy that covers the southwest wall of our principal court. The old birds were again flying in and out, and we expected to find a second brood. Instead there was a big bird nearly fledged spreading over as much space as the four little wagtails together. One of our shrewdest men in such matters at once pronounced it a cuckoo. And we remembered that a large bird which he took to be a cuckoo had been seen on the green by one of our attendants





some time before. The wagtails were quite as diligent in their attentions as they had been to their own young, and it was a pleasure to watch them daily. In a few days the strange bird was fledged and hopped away with the help of its wings to one of the neighbouring bushes, when we lost it for some time, until the movements of the wagtails again revealed it.

(2).

"It was then that the thought occurred of putting it into a cage, so that we might watch the sequel. The wagtails seemed at first disconcerted, but an opening being made by taking out a wire large enough to admit one of them, they soon renewed their assiduities. Here it was quite interesting and even amusing to watch their proceedings. Incessantly flying in and out, both wagtails kept bringing midges and flies to the wide open beak of the big bird so awkwardly perched above them that, as the best way of getting at him, they frequently lighted on his back and dropped their supplies overhead into his maw. And all this it must be remembered happened in a place where a hundred patients were walking round and round two hours twice a day—a fact which speaks alike for the conduct of the patients and the confidence of the birds.

(3).

"A curious circumstance now occurred. The hen wagtail took leave of her charge for some days—from August 6 to August 15, according to my friend Mr. Taylor's Diary—for I have no note of these dates, though I remember the circumstance well—and her mate officiated alone. We thought at first there must be a new nest in the neighbourhood, but she returned too soon for that, and her absence remained unaccounted for. Both wagtails then continued the same course of unremitting and unwearied devotion. There were several attempts at photographing the cuckoo with no very good success. On one of these occasions when Dr. Finch took the bird in his hand and was trying to make it perch on a finger, it escaped and flew to the top of the wall, then over the top of the round house, and right over the next wall into one of the elm trees outside. A ladder was fetched, and the stupid creature instead of escaping outright kept its perch on a stout branch as if fascinated, and so was easily laid hold of.

(4).

"The cuckoo most likely lost strength during the absence of his foster-mother, but all they could do together with all their wonderful activity was insufficient. Nor was the help of flies, worms, bread and pieces of meat of much use. One morning we found it dead on the floor of the cage, and the wagtails fluttering about in piteous agitation. The hen bird then took her station on the walk in front, while her mate kept watch on the wall, and when

the dead bird was taken away to be stuffed, then only did they desert the place never to return. We never saw them again, and last year there was no wagtail's nest in that court.

R. W.

Wednesday, January 4.  
1888."

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn reports that in 1886 he obtained four eggs from the following nests:—Sedge-Warbler's (two); Hedge-Sparrow's (one); Robin's (one).

## ORDER STRIGES.

### FAMILY STRIGIDÆ.

BARN-OWL. *Strix flammea*, Linnæus.

"Screech-Owl," "White Owl."

Resident, and generally distributed.—This bird has more than once visited the portico of the Museum at night. Twice during 1884-5 I found its chalky excreta splashed on the steps, and once I found a pellet containing the skull of a Sparrow. In the spring of 1885, I found that it frequented Aylestone Church. In conversation with my friend the late Mr. Widdowson, some year or so before his lamented death, he told me of an extraordinary parasite he constantly found, during the winter months, in the legs of this bird, and I asked him to send me the next specimen, which he did on 7th Jan., 1884, writing:—"If you take the skin off the legs, you will find what I take to be the nidus of some insect, and I believe you would find the same in one-half the number killed at this season of the year, but at no other time, and in no other species." On examination, I found, on the tibia just above the joint, under the skin, in the subcutaneous tissues, a collection of minute seed-like objects, which, under the 1-inch objective, resolved themselves into thousands of whitish-yellow acari. Under a higher power, I made out their possession of eight semi-spinous jointed legs, around an oval, sub-hyaline body, but I could not (even under the  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch, our highest power) make out anything else but one or two short transverse lines and a slit nearly in the centre of the body. From the drawing I made of one of them, I infer their relation to the itch insect.

It is recorded in the 'Zoologist,' 1869, p. 1724, that a young tame Owl, about which a most entertaining account is given, flew away one evening when taken into the garden, and was not recovered until three days after, at seven o'clock in the morning, when he came to the bedroom window, and knocked and flapped against the glass for admittance, and was caught, but that how he found







his way back among so many houses cannot be imagined—this happening in Leicester.

Harley once found two eggs, two young birds almost in a “squab” state, and one fledgeling far advanced towards maturity, in one nest.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn once took a clutch of eggs from the bottom of a hollow tree.

## FAMILY A S I O N I D Æ.

LONG-EARED OWL. *Asio otus* (Linnæus).

“Horned Owl.”

Resident, but rarer than the Short-eared Owl.—It was included by Mr. Babington amongst the birds of Charnwood Forest (p. 66) as “not very common.” Harley noted that it occurred at Gopsall Woods, and that it affected well-wooded tracts, especially where coniferous trees and evergreens prevail, but was not so frequently met with as the “Brown” or “Ivy” Owl. He wrote:—“The Long-eared Owl is, of all our nocturnal birds of prey, the most solitary,” and remarked that it does not limit itself to small mammalia, but attacks the young Pheasant, and makes havoc of the Partridge, as he had more than once witnessed. I received one from Gopsall in 1880. Mr. Macaulay presented one to the Museum, which had been caught in a Rat-trap at Saddington Reservoir, 26th Oct., 1882. I obtained another (a female with well-developed eggs) from Elkington, shot in the district on 24th March, 1884, and I received a male from the late Mr. Widdowson, shot at Melton on 30th April, 1885.

“This species makes no nest, but, betaking itself to the spruce-fir or pine, selects the deserted nest of a Magpie or Carrion-Crow, which it refits for its own use.” Thus Harley, who had seen its young taken from such a situation, in the month of July, in a half-fledged condition, but could not state positively whether they were the first or second brood. He added:—“While the nestlings are dependent upon their parents, they are the most clamorous for food of all the *Strigidæ*, and on still evenings, in a retired district, the noise made by the brood may be heard several furlongs distant.” On 18th May, 1882, I went over to Ashlands to see four young ones, taken from the deserted nest of a Carrion-Crow on the 13th. The birds were feeding well, and were very pretty, being covered with greyish-white down, freckled with dusker markings, and with distinct ear-tufts about half an inch in length, also grey, and barred; their irides were pale yellow. Mr. Davenport, who took them, described the ears of the old bird as “standing up above the nest like the ears of a Fox.”

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn has furnished me with the following notes:—“About 1876 a specimen was shot in Wardley Wood by Mr. Cooper of Ayston, and is now in his possession. Mr. H. W. Betts, of Ketton

Grange, found, in 1883 or 1884, five young and one egg of this species in an old Magpie's nest at Ketton Pits, and in May, 1887, a brother of Mr. Betts found, in an old Carrion-Crow's nest at Ketton, three young Long-eared Owls and three eggs, the latter being evidently of a later laying."

SHORT-EARED OWL. *Asio brachyotus* (Forster).

"Woodcock-Owl."

A winter migrant, generally distributed, but not common, and never remaining to breed.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 66) mentioned it as occurring "in the wilder parts of the moors, and in turnip-fields." This species, unlike any other Owl, is frequently seen in the daytime, often falling to the gun of the sportsman in the autumn, and Harley justly remarked that its flight is "performed in an awkward, vacillating manner, reeling, as it were, from side to side." Mr. Ingram writes:—"Occurs amongst gorse-bushes and low shrubs, generally two or three together." The late Mr. Widdowson, from whom I received several specimens, considered them fairly common near Melton. One, procured at Leicester Abbey on 20th Sept., 1882, by Mr. Warner's keeper, was presented to the Museum. Mr. Davenport shot one at Ashlands, in September, 1882, and Mr. Macaulay reported one shot at Smeeton Hills, 15th Nov., 1882.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough reports it from Barnsdale and Exton, and Mr. Horn remarks that it is occasionally flushed from turnips in the Partridge-shooting season.

TAWNY OWL. *Syrnium aluco* (Linnæus).

"Brown Owl," "Grey Owl," "Ivy-Owl," "Wood-Owl."

Resident, but not very common.—I received two nestlings (a male and female by dissection) taken at Bradgate, 15th May, 1885, and an adult pair procured at Newtown Linford, on 19th Dec., 1885. The gizzard of the male contained the beak of a Sparrow or Greenfinch, a few feathers and bones, and a quantity of fur of Mice, including a lower jaw of the Bank-Vole. The gizzard of the female contained a little fur and some remains of the Bank-Vole, a quantity of feathers, and two beaks of Sparrows.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn writes me:—"On 2nd April, 1886, I took a clutch of four eggs from a hollow branch of a willow-tree near Wardley Wood. From the same place in the previous year we took a young one. They are said to have bred in this clump of willow-trees, all more or less hollow, for many years."

LITTLE OWL. *Athene noctua* (Scopoli).

Has not occurred in the counties, although Harley writes:—"I record this on the authority of an ornithological friend resident at Melton Mowbray, who





relates its occurrence at a village or hamlet situated in the vicinity of that town. The bird had, it seems, taken possession of a chimney of a small cottage or tenement, to which spot, no doubt, it had repaired for security and safety." The late Mr. R. Widdowson, who was evidently the friend alluded to, wrote me:—"Once saw one at Derby, in a cage, alive; had come down a chimney and was caught."

I have inserted this note to prevent confusion, and so that the bird may be referred to its proper county. Writing to Mr. Harting for any particulars which might throw light upon the identity of this specimen, he very kindly replied:—

"The bird above referred to is evidently the Derby specimen recorded by J. J. Briggs, 'Zoologist,' 1844, p. 645. It should be observed that Briggs calls his bird *Strix passerina*,\* and not *Athene noctua*. The two species are perfectly distinct, and it is most likely that the bird in question was *Athene noctua*. As it is clear that it was taken (as Briggs says) 'in or near Derby, I think in a chimney,' it will not, I presume, find any place in your catalogue."

## ORDER ACCIPITRES.

### FAMILY FALCONIDÆ.

MARSH-HARRIER. *Circus æruginosus* (Linnæus).

"Moor-Buzzard."

Mr. Babington (Supplement 'Potter') wrote:—"One killed and another seen at Buddon Wood, in 1841, by the keeper of G. J. D. Butler Danvers, Esq." Harley said Adams told him that he used to take it in his vermin traps very frequently before the enclosure of the Forest (1811), and that "the species used to be met with more recently about the wild, gorsy land lying above Whitwick, called the 'Waste,'" from whence he had seen specimens brought, but, even in his time, it was growing rarer.

HEN-HARRIER. *Circus cyaneus* (Linnæus).

"Blue Hawk."

Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 66) recorded one as seen at Thringstone in 1841; and Harley said that he once winged a Partridge in barley-stubble, and, on the Dog attempting to retrieve it, the "Blue Hawk" carried it away, notwithstanding the discharge of the gun and the shouts of the bystanders.

He further stated, on the authority of Adams the keeper, that it used to nest in Charnwood Forest regularly before the enclosure, as also in other parts of the county.

\* "It is doubtful if *Strix passerina* of Linnæus has ever occurred in England."



BUZZARD. *Buteo vulgaris* (Leach).

Of accidental occurrence, but formerly resident.—According to Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 65), “two were shot near Charnwood Heath in 1839, one of which came into the possession of Thomas Gisborne, Esq., the other of Kirby Fenton, Esq.” One was killed in Dalby Wood in 1879, so the late Mr. Widdowson informed me.

Early in the present century Harley appears to have taken its eggs in the outwoods skirting Charnwood, probably in the exact spot where, as he wrote, “the species used to nestle in some lofty Scottish fir-trees situated on a rising knoll or rounded eminence in the lower parts of the outwoods, near to the brook which passes thereby and flows onward through the town of Loughborough.” According to Harley, it appeared to breed also at Bardon, Belvoir, Donnington, Gopsall, Martinshaw, and at Oakley and Piper Woods, but was increasingly rare.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. N. L. Calcraft, of Edith Weston, writes me :—“Not common now, but have often been killed.”

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD. *Archibuteo lagopus* (Gmelin).

A winter visitant, of accidental occurrence.—Harley recorded that, in the autumn and winter of 1839-40, no less than thirty were procured in this county and in Nottinghamshire. Of these, five were captured in the Forest of Charnwood, and three others in Bradgate Park. One of the latter—a female, shot by Adams on 12th Nov., 1839—was examined by Harley, who found it to be 2 lbs. 4 oz. in weight, 23 inches in length, and 54 inches in spread of wings. In its crop were found Rabbits’ fur, pieces of flesh, small bones, and the feet of what appeared to be the Field-Mouse. In the stomach were Rabbits’ fur and small bones mixed with animal matter. Another (a male), captured by Adams in the grounds at Bradgate two days afterwards, was found, on examination, to contain some elytra of Beetles. Probably the third is the one in the “Bickley Collection,” Leicester Museum, labelled :—“This bird was shot in Bradgate Park, Leicestershire, November 15th, 1839.” There is another in the Bickley Collection, which the late Mr. Widdowson informed Mr. Macaulay and myself he believed to have been shot at Stathern Hills. Mr. N. C. Curzon, Lockington Hall, writes me :—“A Rough-legged Buzzard was shot here in November, 1875.” One in the possession of Mr. W. T. Everard was, he writes me, shot by him on the Bardon Park Estate, in the winter of 1876 or ’77. One was reported in the ‘Field’ of 21st Feb., 1880, thus :—“It may interest some of your readers to know that I shot a Rough-legged Buzzard last night, while waiting for Wood-Pigeons in a small covert near Ashby-de-la-Zouch. H. G.”

I received notice on 7th Nov., 1887, of a large Hawk said to have been shot at Owston Wood on the 4th, which, if correct, appeared referrible to this species. Another was reported as having been shot at the same place between the 26th and 30th Dec., but, as a considerable amount of evasion has taken place







in reference to both these specimens, preventing me from viewing and reporting upon them, I should consider that if these two birds ever did occur, there was some ulterior reason for keeping the matter quiet, and I mention it in order that observers in the county who are in the secret may communicate with me. The person reported to have shot both specimens is William Henry Johnson, a farmer, of Braunstone by Leicester. Mr. T. Andrew, of King's Stand, Leicester Forest East, informs me that he shot a Rough-legged Buzzard at that place in November, 1888.

In RUTLAND.—I am enabled to add this bird to the list for this county, on the authority of the Rev. J. B. Reynardson, who informs me that one was shot in Holywell Wood in 1854, and is now preserved at Holywell.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE. *Haliaëtus albicilla* (Linnæus).

“Cinereous Eagle” (the young).

Of rare and accidental occurrence.—Harley, in his fair-copied MS. ‘Synopsis of the Vertebrated Animals of the County of Leicester’ (1840-55), so often quoted in these pages, wrote:—“A fine example was captured by Mr. Adams in Bradgate Park on the 26th day of December, 1840. Shortly after it was shot the writer examined it, measured it, and found it to be 87 inches in the stretch of its wings, and 37 inches in length from the extreme curve of its upper mandible to the middle feathers of its tail. The wings, I observed, and also its tail, were much abraded, denoting captivity, as it was thought by us; but on our applying to Mr. Yarrell on the subject of the capture, for some information, that scientific naturalist informed us that such characteristic marks were not unusual nor at all singular.

“The account of the capture of its congener, the Golden Eagle, as narrated in Mr. Babington’s list of Birds, published in Potter’s work on the forest of Charnwood, is no less than the present species now under notice, and described by him very ingeniously by mistake. The identical specimen, however, is in the possession of Lord Stamford, preserved for the examination and curious enquiry of the virtuoso and faunist.” By this it would appear that the statement under the head “Golden Eagle,” in Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 65, is not only incorrect in the most important point, but is probably incorrect in date (April, 1841); and, indeed, the late Rev. Churchill Babington informed me that he was not responsible for the insertion of this, it having been communicated to him when writing the list, by Potter, who had not sufficient ornithological knowledge to discriminate between the two species.

At p. 65 Appendix ‘Potter,’ Mr. Churchill Babington wrote:—“A specimen killed at Swannington by Mr. William Burton. The head and wings only were preserved. These I have seen.” Mr. Macaulay records one, which he saw, shot by Sir G. Beaumont’s keeper at Coleorton, 5th Nov., 1879 (see ‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1882, p. 62). It was seen, some days before it was killed, feeding on a Rabbit. Mr. Macaulay adds that, in the autumn of 1881, Sir G. Beaumont saw an Eagle

soaring over his grounds, but at too great a distance to distinguish the species. The late Mr. Widdowson reported one taken at Stapleford Park, but I have no date, nor particulars, and so cannot vouch for its accuracy.

GOS-HAWK. *Astur palumbarius* (Linnæus).

Probably extinct in the counties.—Harley wrote:—"As regards the distribution of the Gos-Hawk in Leicestershire, I may remark that it used to occur not unfrequently in our woodlands and forest wilds, but of late years it has become exceeding rare. I have known it to be captured at Oakley, and the woods at Gopsal, by both trap and gun," and further added that he had seen one, shot in Oakley Wood by a gamekeeper named Monk. In the 'Midland Naturalist,' 1882, p. 62, Mr. Macaulay writes:—"One was seen in Allextion Wood in 1881"; but his informant, Mr. Davenport, replying to my enquiries, stated that this was a misconception of a verbal communication, and that, so far as he could recollect, "the taxidermist at Billesdon (Potter by name) had in his shop, for six or seven years (if not more), a bird shot at Allextion by a Mr. Brewster, who once lived at Allextion Hall; this bird was *said* to be a Gos-Hawk." Potter, on being written to, confirmed this, but having since then seen him, he informed me that the gentleman was in America. I am still in doubt whether a large female Sparrow-Hawk has not done duty in this, as in many similar cases, for the Gos-Hawk.

SPARROW-HAWK. *Accipiter nisus* (Linnæus).

Resident, and generally distributed.—Twice I have seen this bold Hawk dash over the Museum Square; the last time, in the spring of 1887, so low as to shew the barred chest quite plainly. Just topping the houses, it flew over the town. On the 30th Sept., 1887, when I was out shooting, one of these birds dashed close by me like a flash of lightning, and stooped into a large flock of various Finches feeding on the stubbles, and, before I could think what it was, had sailed away upwards with a little victim in its claws. Such a commotion in a second was never seen! A thousand or more small birds scurrying with shrieks of alarm in all directions, leaving a few of the bolder spirits to aimlessly and futilely follow the pirate into the regions of air. I purchased, for the Museum, two specimens (a male and female) procured at Cropston, and another (an adult male) shot near Ansty on 9th Dec., 1885, whilst attempting to strike the decoy Linnet of a birdcatcher.

This species breeds so near to the town of Leicester as Knighton, from whence I procured a nest and five eggs in July, 1883. Mr. Davenport, who found a Sparrow-Hawk nesting in Skeffington Wood in March, 1884, wrote:—"She laid her first egg on April 30th, and continued laying in the same nest, by fits and starts, until the first week in June, making fourteen eggs in all from this nest! This bird laid forty-five eggs in five years: fourteen in 1879, four in 1880, nine in 1881, four in 1882 (in 1883 I was in Cornwall), and fourteen in 1884. All the





forty-five eggs were very similar, and the five nests were all within a radius of a hundred yards. In 1885 she disappeared." On my writing for confirmation, Mr. Davenport replied:—"I am *positive* the birds are the same in each instance. Each egg betokens a likeness to its neighbour, and each year the brown markings on the eggs were fewer and less defined. Sparrow-Hawks, I have found, patch up, flatten, clean, and enlarge the old nests of Magpies and Carrion-Crows, but I doubt their ever building a new nest, as some authors assert they do. At Keythorpe, from a nest in a fir-plantation, I took fifteen eggs consecutively. After the fifteenth egg I molested her no more. For three consecutive years this bird adapted an old Pigeon's nest to her use in one of the trees."

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Breeds regularly in Wardley and Stoke Woods, from whence several clutches of eggs and young have been obtained by Mr. Horn, to whom I am indebted for the following interesting note of the audacity of this bold Hawk in attacking prey so much larger than itself:—"On or about January 27th, 1888, as Charles Tomblin, of Bisbrook, was walking between Seaton and Barrowden, by the side of the River Welland, he saw a 'gaggle' of about twelve White-fronted Geese (mentioned at p. 127) flying high overhead, and, whilst looking at them, he observed a Sparrow-Hawk rising to them. The first stoop, the Hawk did not fasten, and the Geese flew on; quickly mounting, it stooped a second time, striking one of the Geese, and knocking it down several feet; a third time it mounted, and then the Geese came down 'helter skelter' into the river, hiding themselves amongst the reeds and rushes."

KITE. *Milvus iclinus* (Savigny).

Now extinct in the counties.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 66) wrote:—"One was shot from a window at Longcliff, in the act of watching some young tame pigeons," and Harley remarked that, when he "was a boy, the Kite was common and very widely and well known in the county," it not being an unusual sight to witness one glide overhead towards the Forest of Charnwood and its bleak lone hills. He also stated that, even in his day, it occasionally frequented Martinshaw, Groby Woods, and the extensive belts of plantations flanking the Forest, and that, in the wooded domains of Gopsall and Donington, the Kite was not unknown. Further, "the species occurred at Belvoir Woods in the autumn of 1850." This is the last authentic, dated, record I have of the occurrence of this now almost extinct *Accipiter*, and, with Harley, I can say, "the regal Kite, once so abundant, has fled from its native wilds, and there remains at this day no vestige of its graceful form," and only Kite Hill, in the Forest of Charnwood, remains to remind us that it was once sufficiently numerous to give its name to this place, where, no doubt, it formerly nested. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote me, in 1885, that he had received "three or four during the last twenty-five years."

Col. F. Palmer of Withcote Hall wrote me, in February, 1888:—"We used



many years ago, say fifty, to have the Kite in Owston Wood." Messrs. Adcock, writing in February, 1888, said:—"A regular visitor, sixty-five years ago, to Bradgate Park. Our grandfather, George Evans, told us that he had taken its nest there. He was born at Ansty, and had ample opportunities for observing these birds."

In RUTLAND.—Lord Gainsborough writes me:—"Observed on Barrowden Heath by Mr. J. Montague in 1840. Reported to have occurred in the vicinity of Uppingham by Lord Lilford." The Rev. J. B. Reynardson, M.A., Rector of Careby, Lincolnshire, writing in 1888, kindly informed me that, fifty years and more ago, the Kite was common in Holywell and Pickworth Woods, he having seen two or three pairs soaring over the woods, and that nests were found in both, but, unfortunately, no specimen appears to have been preserved.

#### HONEY-BUZZARD. *Pernis apivorus* (Linnæus).

A rare summer visitant.—Harley recorded that a beautiful though immature example was shot by Chaplin, the gamekeeper, at Martinshaw Wood, on 28th Oct., 1841. It was flushed from the ground, where it was feeding on the larvæ of the common Wasp. Its cry, on being surprised, resembled that emitted by the Barn-Owl, being different from that of any other British bird with which his informant was conversant. A second example was, according to Harley, shot shortly afterwards in Lea Wood, near Ulverscroft, and, for want of a little knowledge of its rarity and value, was consigned to the Ferrets. I saw, at Noseley Hall, a specimen in ordinary dark plumage, shot by Sir Arthur Hazlerigg about 1872. I purchased a female specimen (in the immature brown plumage), shot at Theddingworth, 18th June, 1879, by Mr. W. Hart, jun. The weight was not taken, the bird being extremely thin. Length 23 inches; culmen, 1·5; wing, carpus to tip, 16; tarsus (of a dull orange-yellow), 2; irides, golden-yellow. The crop, gizzard, and intestines were filled with insects, mixed with vegetable fibre, probably grass-roots, one or two blades of grass, and a leaf, no doubt swallowed when tearing out a wild Bee's nest. Careful washing produced small Bees (*Nomada* sp.?), about one hundred Ichneumon-Flies, some *Syrphidæ*, one Soldier-Beetle (*Telephorus* sp.?) and parts of other Beetles, one hundred or more larvæ, or parts of larvæ, of three species of *Geometridæ*, the greater number being probably those of *H. progemmaria*. This specimen is now in the possession of Mr. R. W. Chase, of Edgbaston, Birmingham. I examined a dark specimen in the possession of the late Mr. Widdowson, which was procured near Twyford Mill in September, 1881, by a Mr. Greasley, who for several mornings had seen it about, and had attempted to shoot it, when, after losing sight of it for two days, he was attracted to the spot where it lay dead, by a crowd of little birds surrounding it. Apparently it had been killed by flying against the telegraph-wires. Mr. Ingram writes that one was shot by Mr. Lovett near Belvoir. The Museum possesses an immature male specimen in light snuff-





coloured plumage, procured from the late Mr. Widdowson, to whom it was sent alive, on being taken at Croxton Park, on 13th June, 1884. Mr. Widdowson wrote concerning it:—"I have examined it, and cannot find any wounds. It is very amiable, allowing me to stroke its head or back without showing any temper or fear. It is now two or three days since capture, and it has not eaten anything at present." After it came into my possession I kept it alive up to the end of June, but, although exceedingly tame, it would not touch anything, nor could we force anything down its throat, not even water. After it died we found it had received injury to the walls of the abdomen, evidently caused by shot. The colour of its irides was golden-yellow; legs and toes reddish-yellow.

In RUTLAND.—I am enabled to add this bird to the avi-fauna of the county through Lord Gainsborough, who took me to see one—a light, barred-breasted specimen—in the possession of his keeper, Henry Cunningham, by whom it was shot in Tunneley Wood about 1858-60. This has since passed into the possession of Lord Gainsborough.

PEREGRINE FALCON. *Falco peregrinus* (Tunstall).

Of rare occurrence, and does not breed in the county.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 65), under date 1842, mentioned that "a very fine female was shot five or six years ago, near the Loughborough outwoods," also that "two, a male and female, were killed at Gopsall about two years ago"; these are, without doubt, the same recorded by Harley, who said Mr. Bloxam wrote him that a pair were shot during the summer of 1838. He further stated that Chaplin had met with this species at Groby; Adams had also met with it occasionally at Bradgate, and it had been captured by Monk in Oakley and Piper Woods. Harley also records it from Donington, whilst the late Mr. R. Widdowson appears to have known it to occur at Stapleford Park. Turner reports a female shot by Mr. Berkeley at the North Bridge some years since, while chasing Pigeons. In Oct., 1885, I purchased a specimen for the Museum, an immature female said to have been shot some eight years previously at Woodgate, near the North Bridge, out of some high poplar-trees, but I am rather doubtful as to the genuineness of this statement, and am therefore pleased to record that, in May, 1885, Mr. Owen West kindly allowed the Museum to acquire an adult female Peregrine, undoubtedly shot by himself at Tur Langton about five years previously. It appears that Mr. West was returning from shooting, on Horseback, when he saw a large unknown bird in a tree. Riding rapidly underneath, he was just in time to pop a cartridge in his gun, and fire at the bird as it left the tree, and this he did with one hand, the result of this extraordinary shot being that he killed the bird stone dead.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough reports that it "has been observed at many places in the county, notably at Normanton, by

Mr. J. Montague; several times between 1845-55, by J. Evans at Tickencote; by Mr. H. Bromley at Ashwell; and by Mr. N. L. Calcraft at Empingham, and others." His Lordship further informs me that he has seen a specimen in the possession of T. Royce, shot by him at Exton about 1850. Mr. G. H. Finch possesses a fine young male which Masters shot in Burley Wood, in September, 1880, and Masters informs me that he saw a very fine example in the same wood on 25th Nov., 1888.

HOBBY. *Falco subbuteo*, Linnæus.

An uncommon summer visitant, but has bred in the county.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 65) recorded one specimen as having occurred near Thringstone.

Sir Geo. Beaumont wrote to Mr. Macaulay that one was killed at Coleorton in 1874; Mr. Macaulay records its occurrence at Gumley Wood on several occasions, on the authority of the Rev. A. Matthews, and a male killed at Rothley, in March, 1880, is now in Mr. Macaulay's possession. He further reports having seen a male Hobby, shot at Smeeton, in January, 1888, by Mr. John Peberdy. Mr. Davenport writes:—"A pair were shot by the keeper at Stockerston Wood in the summer of 1881. One was chasing the other, and both were killed by one discharge, and hung on a tree with other vermin. The late Mr. Widdowson reported three during 1880, and Elkington has received several within the past twenty years, reporting one, a male, caught by nets in 1882. Some years ago I purchased one (a male, in the flesh) killed at Hinckley, and another (a mounted specimen), at Sir Beaumont Dixie's sale in September, 1885, shot at Bosworth Park. Both are now in the Museum. I saw, in 1888, a specimen in the collection of Mr. H. C. Woodcock, of Rearsby, which, he informed me, was shot at Brentingby many years ago.

According to Harley, "it usually breeds in the deserted nest of a Carrion-Crow or Magpie, which it repairs. In the summer of 1840, a pair of Hobbies took up their abode in the deserted nest of a Magpie, on a large elm standing in a hedgerow within the lordship of Houghton. Some of the young birds were taken from the nest and made pets of by a neighbouring gentleman, who kept them for some time. Chaplin, of Groby, in the month of September, 1841, met with this species in Martinshaw Wood. The parent birds were destroyed, and the young ones taken away."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough writes:—"Appears frequently (probably every year) in the woods about Barnsdale. Reported also from Normanton by Mr. J. Montague." I have seen, in the possession of Thos. Allies, one of Lord Gainsborough's keepers, a large female specimen which was shot in Barnsdale Wood some years ago. C. Masters states that old and young are killed, almost every spring, at Burley-on-the-Hill, and he shewed me two fine male specimens which were shot at Burley Ponds about 1882, and







a female shot in Hambleton Wood about the same date. Mr. Horn writes me that a specimen was shot in Wardley Wood, about 1876, by Mr. Cooper of Ayston, and is now in his possession. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote that it had bred at Burley Park, Oakham, since 1880. Mr. Calcraft informs me that "a few pairs breed every year."

It has been recorded that the Hobby will sometimes hawk Cockchafers, Dragon-flies, etc., over ponds, and has been known to take Frogs from water, but that it will take fishes is still more singular, and I believe unprecedented. C. Masters, however, who is a good observer, wrote me on the 15th Oct., 1888:—"There was a small Hawk about the size of a Hobby hawking over the ponds. It dived into the water and caught a fish, which looked to be a Roach about  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. If Hobby-Hawks catch fish, I should think that is what it would be."

MERLIN. *Falco aesalon* (Tunstall).

"Blue Hawk," "Pigeon-Hawk," "Stone-Falcon."

An uncommon winter visitant, not remaining to breed.—According to Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 65) it has occurred near Sheepshed, and Harley stated that it comes to our woodlands in autumn, remaining during the winter months only. I saw, in the possession of Mr. H. C. Woodcock, an adult male specimen which he shot, on a tree in his garden at Rearsby, about 1868. Mr. J. B. Ellis presented to the Museum, on 30th Jan., 1882, an adult female Merlin in the flesh, shot at Bardon Hill, and has informed me of two others since then, one of which was shot. Mr. Ingram writes:—"Taken occasionally at Belvoir." The late Mr. Widdowson reported several during the last few years of his life. Elkington received a female—which I saw—shot at Dunton Bassett on 11th Dec., 1885. Two females in the Museum, purchased as mounted specimens from Elkington and Freer, in 1885 and 1887 respectively, are said to have been shot in the district some years previously.

In RUTLAND.—According to Mr. Calcraft, of Edith Weston, "A rare visitor, though seen every year."—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it has been reported from Normanton by Mr. J. Montague. Masters tells me that he shot one at Burley about 1880; he sent me a young female specimen which he shot near Hambleton Wood, 8th Nov., 1888; and he shot a male specimen at Burley on the 29th, which is now in the possession of Mr. Finch.

RED-FOOTED FALCON. *Tinnunculus vespertinus* (Linnæus).

The Museum Donation-book records the presentation, by the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc., on the 22nd Feb., 1866, of an "Orange-legged Hobby, shot near the Machine-house, Belgrave Road, July 1st, 1865," with a note in the margin, "first recorded specimen in this county," and in the 'Field' of 10th March, 1866, is the following note:—"I saw, a few days ago, a very fine

specimen of the Red-footed Falcon, a young male, killed two or three miles from Leicester about two months ago. It is now in the Museum of that town. The Curator bought it for a trifle from the person who had it in the flesh. It was shot by a young man who lives at Belgrave, a suburb of Leicester. ROBERT WIDDOWSON (Melton Mowbray)." The identical specimen is still in the Museum, and I have been fortunate enough to find the man who shot it, Thos. Adcock of Syston Street, lately returned from America, who says he was so nervous when he first saw it, thinking it was something rare, that he shot at it twice without effect; the second time it flew right away over the fields and gardens, but finally returned and alighted on a little heap of something, when, at the third attempt, he succeeded in shooting it. I am pleased to verify this note, about which I have now no doubt, and therefore cancel my previous remarks (see 'Zool.,' 1886, p. 166).

KESTREL. *Tinnunculus alaudarius* (Gmelin).

"Stannel" (*i.e.* Stand-Gale?), "Windhover."

Resident, and generally distributed.—Harley recorded that he had seen it attack the Starling, and bear off the Black Thrush and its congener, but that it appears to feed much on the smaller kinds of mammals and various *Coleoptera*, especially the Cockchafer. Mr. Macaulay considers that, since the passing of the Wild Birds Protection Act, this species has become commoner, which tallies with my own observation. In the stomachs of Kestrels I have dissected I have never found anything but remains of Beetles and Mice. Mr. G. H. Storer informs me that, whilst Snipe-shooting with some friends at Arnesby, in December, 1882, they were entering a shed, when they saw a Lark flying towards them, hotly pursued by a Kestrel. The Lark entered the barn, and dropped, trembling with fright, into the straw at the feet of one of the party, just as its swift pursuer reached the door. Seeing the group, the Kestrel veered off, and, a few seconds later, the Lark recovered, and left also. (Noted also 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' Jan., 1889, p. 26).

This species builds quite close to Leicester, at Knighton, where I procured, on 3rd July, 1883, a nest and five young. Johnson, keeper at Laughton Lodge, Rugby, sent me, in May, 1885, an old Carrion-Crow's nest, in which a Kestrel had laid five eggs, light-coloured and very handsome. I weighed two of them when quite fresh; one was a little more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  oz., the other exactly  $\frac{3}{4}$  oz. Mr. Davenport writes:—"My experience of Kestrels is that they are more sensitive than the Sparrow-Hawk, forsaking their nest if tampered with. If I find a nest with three eggs, and take one only, it is almost a certainty the bird will not only forsake, but will cast away the remaining eggs as well. I found a white egg at Billesdon Coplow in May, 1882." This bird builds early in some seasons, and Mr. Davenport records that, in 1885, he took a nest on 18th April containing six eggs, at Slawston Gorse.





IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Breeds regularly in Stoke, Merevale, and Wardley Woods, as I am informed by Mr. Horn, who writes me that, with regard to this bird forsaking its nest if tampered with, his experience is just the opposite to that of Mr. Davenport. He says:—"From an old Magpie's nest, in 1884, we took five Kestrel's eggs; from the same nest, in 1885, we took four eggs, and about a fortnight later four more, and the keeper told me the other day that, later in the season, he saw young birds in the nest. Many years ago I cleared out, at short intervals, a Kestrel's nest four times, taking altogether eight eggs. The old Magpie's nest referred to above is, this year, blown to pieces, but in an adjoining tree, on the 24th March, I saw the old Kestrel busy repairing an old Crow's nest."

OSPREY. *Pandion haliaëtus* (Linnæus).

A rare autumn visitant.—Mr. Babington wrote (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 65):—"One shot by the Marquis of Hastings at Donington Park, October, 1841, is in his lordship's collection." According to Harley, one was shot in Sileby field in 1840, while sitting on the shafts of an agricultural roller. A third example was obtained by Adams at Groby Pool; and in 1841, during the autumnal months, Sir Oswald Mosley recorded that a fourth was shot at Overseal. The late Mr. Widdowson informed me of one, a male, fired at by Mr. George Hack of Edmondthorpe, to whom I wrote, and who obligingly informed me that it was killed on 13th Nov., 1858, was 5 ft. 4 inches in spread of wing, and was a very fine specimen. Mr. Widdowson wrote me the further information that, after the shot was fired, the bird flew about fifty yards, and Mr. Hack thought he had killed it, but on skinning it there was not a single fresh shot in it, but an old one through the breast bone, in the cavity of the stomach, and much coagulated blood. Mr. Widdowson remarked that he had "no doubt the exertion killed it, and that it received this wound at Stapleford Park, where it was previously shot at." In the 'Midland Naturalist,' 1882, p. 62, Mr. Macaulay records that one, shot some years since at Noseley, is now in the possession of Sir A. Hazlerigg; but the latter gentleman tells me that this is incorrect, there being no Osprey at Noseley, therefore, whoever was Mr. Macaulay's informant is to blame for the mis-statement. I received one, shot at the Reservoir, Bradgate Park, on 18th Sept., 1879, by C. Overton, keeper to Lord Stamford. It was a fine female specimen: weight, 4 lbs. 2 oz.; extreme length, 23 inches; spread of wings, 5 ft. 4 inches; tail, 9 inches; carpus, to tip of third primary, 18; culmen, 1·5; tibia, 5; tarsus, 2·5; middle toe with claw, 2·5. Overton, who had several opportunities of observing it feed, saw it take several fishes with hardly a miss. This specimen was mounted for the late Earl of Stamford and Warrington, and is, I believe, now at Enville. Wesley, keeper at Bradgate, informed me that in March, 1887, he saw a fine example at the Reservoir in Bradgate Park, and repeatedly saw it catch fishes.



IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. R. Tryon, of Oakham, writes me :—  
 “The Osprey was seen quite close on April 2nd, 1886, and caught a fish. For some years, about 1879 to 1883, an Osprey visited the Burley Ponds every year, almost always on the same day, staying about thirty hours; it was in April. I saw a paragraph in the ‘Grantham Journal,’ saying such a bird had been seen at Sir G. Beaumont’s, Coleorton, and the following year another paragraph saying it had been shot by the keeper. On each occasion I had seen the bird myself here the day before, and after it was shot no Osprey came for two or three years.”

## ORDER STEGANOPODES.

### FAMILY PELECANIDÆ.

CORMORANT. *Phalacrocorax carbo* (Linnæus).

An accidental straggler from the coast, and I have no other record save that furnished by Mr. Macaulay, who took me to see an immature bird in the possession of Mr. J. Potter, station-master of East Langton, who told me that it was caught alive in a grass-field near Langton Hall on 6th Sept., 1883, after a strong gale the previous day from the S.W.

GANNET. *Sula bassana* (Linnæus).

“Solon Goose.”

An accidental straggler from the coast.—Harley recorded that a young male of the year was picked up in a dying condition on the borders of Buddon Wood, near Quorndon, date unfortunately not noted. Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 70) supplemented this by saying that it was in the possession of Miss Watkinson of Woodhouse. Potter, of Billesdon, records a specimen caught alive at Houghton-on-the-Hill, in September, 1869. Mr. Macaulay records (‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1882, p. 79) that an immature bird of this species, which had been wounded, was picked up half dead at Shangton in 1878, and that he saw it, after it was set up, in the possession of Mr. Ward, farm-bailiff, Wistow. Mr. Ingram writes :—“A young bird, shot between Bottesford and Scarrington, near the River Smite, is in the possession of Mr. H. V. Flower, of Scarrington.” The late Mr. Widdowson wrote :—“One killed at Somerby near here” (N.D.).

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. N. L. Calcraft writes me that a young bird of the year was picked up at Edith Weston somewhere about 1876, and is now in the possession of Mr. R. Lucas, J.P., of Edith Weston Hall; and Mr. Horn writes that a specimen was caught alive near Uppingham in 1886, and is now in the possession of Mr. Haslam, one of the Masters at Uppingham School. This was reported in the ‘Field.’







## ORDER HERODIONES.

## FAMILY ARDEIDÆ.

HERON. *Ardea cinerea* (Linnæus).

“Crane” (by error), “Frank” (in allusion to its note), “Hernshaw.”

Resident, sparingly distributed, and breeding in a few localities.—A young male, shot at S. Mary’s mills, 7th Sept., 1881, is now in the Museum.

Harley recorded that it used formerly to build at Mere Hill Wood, by Cotes, two miles south of Loughborough, placing its nest on the lateral branches of the Scotch fir, from whence he had taken its eggs. It also built in Martinshaw Wood, where, in the spring of 1840, the birds were shot down and destroyed. After that date he stated that the species had but one habitat in the county where it nested,—viz., at Stapleford, the residence of Lord Harborough, and even there it was not very abundant, only about half-a-dozen nests being built there annually.

I am informed by Henry Long, keeper at Bosworth Park, that some years ago a single pair of Herons built a nest there. Mr. G. H. Storer records a solitary nest built in Buddon Wood in 1885, and Mr. R. Groves another, in May, the same year, at Bradgate. Mr. Ingram writes :—“Occurs winter and summer, and a pair have nested for several seasons in a wood at Belvoir.” On 5th May, 1884, I went over to Stapleford Park, by permission of the late Rev. B. Sherard Kennedy, to see the heronry, and, if possible, procure a pair of old birds with the nest and young for the Museum. I found the heronry had increased since Harley’s time, from forty to fifty nests being built in high elms and firs on an island in the lake, to which the keeper rowed me. Nests and birds were so plentiful, and the latter doing so much damage to the fishery, that the keeper asked me to shoot several, and so, both being provided with “shooting irons,” he with a 12 bore C. F. and I with a .380 Rook-rifle, at which he was, at first, disposed to “snigger” as being of little use, we took up our position within sixty yards or so of a nest, which he believed to be tenanted by “chicks.” Soon afterwards something stirred, and I, thinking it must be the old bird, fired and evidently struck it, as it then stood up, and slightly raising its wings, subsided again into the nest. Lucas, the keeper, at once said “He’s hit,” and began to climb the tree, but, when near the top, out scuttled the bird, rising amongst the thick twigs and soaring overhead, at which time I saw that the ball had cut some of the primaries away, and, in spite of perhaps a flesh wound, the bird, a fine example, made its escape. Moving to another part of the wood, we lay in ambush within about seventy yards of a large and high elm-tree, on the topmost branches of which were placed no less than five nests. Half an hour’s watch brought what appeared to be—by one of the gleams of sunshine with which we were favoured—an adult bird slowly sailing around high up in the air. He saw no danger and lowered his flight, and, just as he poised himself

with outstretched wings on the edge of one of the nests, I fired, cutting him headlong into it. Great was the jubilation! for, as he fell, we imagined we could see the black and white plumage, and the long plumes, of a fully mature bird. Now for the best climber! Lucas ran to the tree and began to ascend, but, as he did so, the wounded bird rose upright in the nest, and I, fearing he was but slightly hit and would get away like the first, fired again from the same spot, and this time he lay lifeless, half in and half out of the nest, and, as his head depended, we could see his beautiful white neck plumes and long black crest. Manfully struggling upward, taking advantage of every twig and every hollow for the foot, the keeper got along bravely, until met midway by a huge boss which, jutting out, barred his progress. In vain he tried to get around it, and, coming down, confessed himself beaten. I then tried myself, with less success, and, disregarding his protestations that the feat of getting either bird or nest out of the tree was impossible, sent him off for a long rope and more string. He was away for about an hour and a half, and during that time a bird which I judged to be a female, came to the next nest to that in which I had lost the first bird, and settled. Again the rifle rang out, and brought it to bag—this bird, a young female, falling dead out of the tree to the ground. Its mouth was full of Loach, and, whilst warm, I noted the colour of the eyes and soft parts, and then covered it up with my great-coat, to protect it from the rain which was falling, and making things so uncomfortable that I was not sorry when Lucas brought the lunch. After this I essayed with him to throw the rope over a limb of the tree just above the boss, but a few trials convinced us that gravity was not at all willing to be overcome in that manner. Lucas tired of this fun very soon, and was more than willing to give it up, but I pointed out that “metallic ointment” was good for sprains and bruises, and having by this time tied two of his cartridges to a length of string, I managed, at the sixteenth throw, to lodge it over the limb, and by careful manipulation got the end to the ground. The rope being tied to this was drawn back slowly over the limb above the boss. All was now easy climbing; both ends of the rope being made fast to the trunk close to the ground, Lucas went up hand over hand, and gradually wriggled himself over the boss, and rested on the fork. Here another difficulty presented itself. Just above were three other limbs, jutting out so awkwardly as to obstruct his passage, but by dint of coaxing and chaffing I persuaded him to persevere, and he managed, by propping himself with his back to the trunk, to throw the rope, loosened from below, over the limbs above, and so progressed another stage. At this juncture I sent him up a little “fire-water,” by the aid of the weighted string he carried in his pocket. So he ascended, vowing at every step he could get no higher, and proclaiming his rooted objection to “such hard work as this.” At last, when quite near the nest, made nervous perhaps by the thinness of the branches, he sang out, “I zay, zur, I can’t go no furdur, this ’ere is too ’ard work for me.” “Lucas,” I shouted up, “you MUST, and directly the nest reaches the ground, you shall have a sovereign.” At





this juncture he, I could plainly see, touched his forehead with thanks, until I feared a funeral was impending, and so directed him to get above the nest, lie close to the trunk, and cut off the branch on which the nest rested; this he did by means of the saw passed up to him by the string he carried. Some time was occupied in sawing away lesser branches, until the main one was attacked. As it cracked, two great birds nearly as large as the parent, ran out along the branches, and had to be brought to earth by the rifle. At last the bough with the great nest swayed, broke off, turned over in the air, righted itself, and finally fell upright supported by the underwood; with it came the old bird, a magnificent and fully adult male, with lengthy plumes and crests, together with the half of a large Eel, which he had brought to his young. Two balls had passed right through the centre of his body, within two inches of each other, either of which would have been fatal. The nest—an enormous structure, four feet across, and two feet thick, built of sticks (everyone “whitewashed”) and afterwards filling a cart—had not sustained the slightest injury, and was not even jolted out of the forks in which it was built. Lucas came down as he went up, assisted by the rope, and, from the time of the bird being shot, to the getting of the nest, occupied us between four and five hours. Needless to say, he had not a minute to wait for his well-earned reward, and soon commenced to climb the tree from whence I had shot the female, and to my delight procured from her nest four small “chicks,” which, by their charmingly-quaint hair-like crests and downy plumage, to say nothing of their size, were in striking contrast to the other two young birds. Soon after this we found an unbroken, quite fresh, egg lying on the ground at the foot of a tree, deposited, probably, by a gravid bird.

Four more adult birds were brought down, and thus, firing altogether nine rifle-shots, I bagged eight birds, five of which, viz. the male and his two young, another male, and the female—with the latter’s four chicks, the two nests, the Eel, and the egg—are in the Museum, mounted in a plate-glass case, six feet cube, the nests being embellished with the leaves and buds of the elm carefully reproduced by modelling on the natural twigs.

Harley wrote, at p. 423 of his ‘Synopsis’ :—“The most noteworthy and remarkable bird that appears to have visited Groby Pool of late years was a white Heron shot by Chaplin a few years ago. It was purely white, with black legs and a yellow bill, having also an elongated occipital crest like that of the grey species. The bird, when surprised, attempted to escape, and rose on the wing, with several other birds of the cinereous species; but the albinism of its plumage, according to Chaplin, caused it to be singled out and shot. The bird must have been an albino variety of the Grey Heron or a White Egret; but the elongated crest and occipital plumes which Chaplin affirms the example possessed, denote, I conjecture, a close affinity to the former species, rather than to the White Egret.” Whilst at p. 266 we find :—“The albino example of Heron shot by Chaplin on the banks of Groby Pool, some few years since, and which he described to me very carefully,



could not be *Ardea alba*, as I am assured by Professor MacGillivray, to whom I took occasion to communicate the notice of its occurrence. 'The elongated crest and occipital plumes denote,' observes the Professor, 'its true affinity to *Ardea cinerea*.' Harley's opinion, therefore, appears to have been confirmed by Professor MacGillivray solely on these grounds; but, as the size of the bird is not stated, it might have been a specimen of *Ardea garzetta* but for the colour of the bill. Mr. Harting, who commented upon this in the 'Zoologist,' 1886, p. 197, thinks it "more likely to have been a Spoonbill," but surely Chaplin, who appears to have been a fairly competent observer, would have noted the extraordinary bill of the Spoonbill—so utterly unlike that of any other bird—and have described this peculiarity to Harley.

In RUTLAND.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it is often seen on the ponds at Exton Park, on one occasion so many as seven birds being seen together; and Mr. Horn writes:—"Frequently seen in the Welland Valley, but I do not think we have a Heronry in Rutland."

#### LITTLE BITTERN. *Ardetta minuta* (Linnæus).

A very rare summer visitant to Britain, which, according to Harley, "has once occurred, namely on the banks of Groby Pool at the close of the summer of 1853, as I learn from Chaplin." Mr. Davenport wrote, in January, 1886:—"One was shot some dozen years ago by a Mr. Allen of Glenn, sold by him to Potter, and re-sold by Potter to the Rev. J. Shepherd, the then curate of Billesdon." Potter, of Billesdon, remarking upon this, gives the date as November, 1867, and seems to be quite sure of the species, but, as the bird cannot be traced, the record must stand upon its merits.

#### NIGHT-HERON. *Nycticorax griseus* (Linnæus).

Like the last-named, a very rare visitant to Britain, of which Harley, writing 1840-55, said:—"A fine example was shot by a countryman a few years since in the lordship of Ansty, as it was sitting on the top of a pollard willow by a pool." Harley examined it shortly after capture. "Mention is made," he added, "of another bird having been shot in the year 1846, at Donnington, as I gather from the manuscript of the Rev. Arthur Evans."

#### BITTERN. *Botaurus stellaris* (Linnæus).

Now an accidental visitant to Britain, and rarer than formerly.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68) said:—"One was shot near Ashby, in 1834, by the late Mr. Joseph Cantrell; another, killed at Wanlip, is in the possession of Sir George J. Palmer, Bart.; a third, shot at Glenfield, is in the possession of C. Winstanley, Esq., of Braunstone Hall." Harley wrote:—"The species occurred during the winter months of the year 1844 at Croft, and it has since been met







with on the marshy parts of Bosworth pool or 'Big river.' It has been met with also at Swithland. It occurred in the winter of 1854-5 at Carlton Curliu." He further recorded that it "occurred in December, 1855." Mr. Sebastian Evans, writing to Mr. Babington, referred to a notice in the 'Leicester Journal' of 29th Jan., 1847, of the occurrence of a Bittern at Swithland a few days before. Mr. W. Brookes, of Croft, informs me that a friend of his shot one at Elmsthorpe somewhere about 1848. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote me that he had "known about six killed in his neighbourhood in about twenty-five years." The Museum contains a fine example (probably a male) shot at Enderby, and presented by Mr. William Simpson, 21st Dec., 1871. I saw a fine specimen in the possession of C. Adcock, who told me that it was shot at Thurmaston, on 28th Dec., 1878. I gave Mr. Macaulay a note of two Bitterns, said to have been shot near Lutterworth in 1881, which he recorded in the 'Midland Naturalist,' 1882, p. 77. I have since had reason to believe, however, that this was a fraud, and that the birds were purchased in Leadenhall Market. Two which I purchased in 1885 at the sale at Bosworth Hall, I was assured were shot in Bosworth Park some years previously. A female Bittern, kindly presented to the Museum by Mr. E. Willars, engineer, on 4th March, 1885, was shot at Cropston Reservoir. It had been seen about the place for two or three weeks, evidently in a wounded condition, and the man who killed it, being too near, unfortunately mutilated it still more, so that it reached the Museum with both legs and one wing badly shattered, and the lower part of the back nearly blown away, but, after being washed and submitted to several technical processes, it came out a very fine specimen, and is now in the "local" collection. The measurements were as follow:—Extreme length, 26 inches; tarsus,  $3\frac{1}{2}$ ; wing,  $11\frac{1}{2}$ ; culmen, nearly  $2\frac{3}{4}$ . Colour of beak, yellowish-grey; around eye, lighter greenish-grey; eye, bright yellow; legs and toes, greyish-yellow, like a Snipe's.

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—The Rev. J. B. Reynardson writes me that one was shot in Pickworth Wood about 1850 or 1851, and is now preserved at Holywell. Mr. R. Tryon states that one was shot in Greetham Wood, November, 1876, and I have seen a very beautiful specimen, apparently a male, in the possession of the Earl of Gainsborough, which was shot at the ponds in Exton Park, in January, 1887.

## FAMILY CICONIIDÆ.

### WHITE STORK. *Ciconia alba* (Bechstein).

Of accidental occurrence in Britain.—Harley recorded that one was obtained near Melton Mowbray in 1849, and the narrative of its capture was related to him by a resident of that place, Mr. Widdowson, who had the bird in his

possession. One in the possession of Mr. T. Morris, of Wycombe, near Melton Mowbray, was shot by his brother early one morning as it sat on one of his farm-buildings at Scalford Lodge, in 1851. I believe this to be the one alluded to by Harley. Another specimen of this bird was shot at West Leigh, Narborough Road, on 6th March, 1873, and was presented to the Museum, where it still remains, by Mr. Archibald Turner.

## FAMILY PLATALEIDÆ.

GLOSSY IBIS. *Plegadis falcinellus* (Linnæus).

“Black Curlew.”

This rare bird is now but an accidental visitor to Britain, but was formerly common enough to be mentioned in the old doggerel distich—

“A Curlew, be she white or be she *black*,  
She carries twelvepence on her back.”

The “Bickley Collection” in the Museum contains a fine specimen of this bird, for which the late Mr. Widdowson told me £3 3s. was paid by Mr. Bickley to the fortunate sportsman who brought it to him. Mr. Macaulay stated (‘Mid. Nat.’ 1882, p. 77), in reference to this specimen:—“I have been recently informed by the donor’s brother that it was killed on the border of the county and within it.” This, however, is an error, and Leicestershire cannot claim this *rara avis*, for on the back of the case it is thus labelled:—“This rare and valuable specimen was shot near the Derby Railway Station in February, 1842. H. B.” Also, “Killed near Derby, February, 1842.”

## ORDER ANSERES.

### FAMILY ANATIDÆ.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE. *Chenalopex aegyptiacus* (Linnæus).

This species is so often kept in a state of semi-domestication on private waters, and so often contrives to effect its escape, that it is very doubtful if any of the specimens which are from time to time shot in a state of freedom are really wild birds. Harley stated that one was shot close to Leicester, 4th March, 1843. It bore no sign of captivity, and had three companions, which went away in a southerly direction. This is probably the specimen in the Museum, recorded in the Donation-book as “shot on the River Soar, 1843,” by Mr. H. S. Hamel. Another entry records that a specimen shot at Oakham, 13th Nov., 1858, was presented by Mr. F. Palmer.

In RUTLAND.—One was shot on Burley Ponds by Masters in 1882, and is now in the possession of Mr. G. H. Finch.





GREY LAG GOOSE. *Anser cinereus* (Meyer).

“Wild Goose.”

An uncommon winter visitant.—According to Harley, “shot in the county during the hard frost of the winter of 1842,” and Mr. Macaulay (‘Mid. Nat.’ 1883, p. 86) states that one was shot at Shangton on 10th Dec., 1882, by Mr. Brown.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it is reported to have been seen feeding in the fields between Tickencote and Stamford by the Rev. J. B. Reynardson, about 1850, but has not been recorded lately.

BEAN-GOOSE. *Anser segetum* (Gmelin).

An uncommon winter visitant.—Harley observed:—“The Narrow-billed Grey Goose occasionally visits us, and appeared in the county during the month of October, 1842, making its transit by large flocks in a north-westerly direction.” The most recent instance of its appearance in Leicestershire, so far as I am aware, occurred in December, 1880, when, according to Mr. Davenport, “a specimen was shot at Noseley by Mr. A. M. Hazlerigg.”

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE. *Anser albifrons* (Scopoli).

An uncommon winter visitant.—I have seen a fine specimen which was shot at Tur Langton on 18th Dec., 1879, by Mr. Owen West, as recorded by Mr. Macaulay (‘Mid. Nat.’ 1882, p. 11).

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn wrote me that a small “gaggle” of about twelve of these Geese frequented the Welland Valley, in the neighbourhood of Gretton, during the winter of 1887-8, and that on or about 27th Jan., 1888, Charles Tomblin of Bisbrook saw them, whilst flying high overhead, repeatedly attacked by a Sparrow-Hawk (see p. 113), causing them to come down “helter skelter” into the river, and hide amongst the reeds and rushes. Tomblin then walked up to within six yards of them, and, as they rose, secured a couple, one of which is now in Lord Gainsborough’s possession. The Earl of Gainsborough writes:—“Also reported from Harringworth, on the Welland, by Mr. R. Tryon.”

BRENT GOOSE. *Bernicla brenta* (Pallas).

“Black Goose.”

An uncommon winter visitant, the occurrence of this species inland at a distance from the sea being very unusual.—Harley, however, stated that “several were shot in the lordship of Kirkby Mallory,” on 31st December, 1844. The Museum Donation-book records one shot at Syston, and presented by the Lit. and Phil. Soc., 28th Jan., 1854.



In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that one was shot on the Welland, near Stamford, by Mr. Sellars of that town, in January, 1888, and was preserved by Evans of Bourne.

CANADA GOOSE. *Bernicla canadensis* (Linnæus).

An introduced species, often found at large, especially in winter, and roaming so far afield as to give rise to the doubt if it may not soon become feral. As shewing how far the roving habits of these birds will lead them, I can testify that, being at Belvoir in 1884, I saw a skein of Geese flying high overhead, going eastward, and called Mr. Ingram's attention to this, who replied:—"Only our Canada Geese going to feed on the marshes." There are two in the Museum, marked in the catalogue as "shot on Groby Pool, April, 1844. Part of a flock of twenty." The late Mr. Widdowson told me that four came to Stapleford Ponds about 1876, two of which were shot. On 4th Sept., 1885, five were killed in four shots, out of a skein of eight which had settled on the river Wreake in the parish of Asfordby. They were shot by a gentleman whose name I do not publish, as he evidently was not aware that he was shooting birds which were most probably semi-domesticated, and on their travels from some adjacent ornamental water. Those which escaped subsequently fell victims, I understand, to the guns of other people. Mr. Macaulay informed me that four were shot out of a flock of twelve at Smeeton, on 8th Jan., 1887.

During the summer of 1844, according to Harley, a pair bred on an island in the middle of Groby Pool, but it was not certain that the eggs were productive. These were probably part of the flock of twenty mentioned above. Messrs. Lever and Moss have recorded in 'The Zoologist,' 1885 (p. 259), the nesting of this bird on a pond at Garendon, in May, 1885, and appeared to think that this was not a case of the nesting of an escaped bird, and instanced the fact that a flock of about forty frequented the same waters in the winter of 1884, and also before that time.

MUTE SWAN. *Cygnus olor* (Gmelin).

"Tame Swan."

Introduced some centuries ago into Britain, and now domesticated. It breeds at the Abbey Park, Leicester, Thornton Reservoir, and other places in the county.—Two fine birds—an adult and a young female—strayed from the Abbey Park on 11th Jan., 1884, and were shot near the "Twelve Bridges" by two unknown men, who, on being pursued by a policeman, dropped their booty, thereby benefiting the Museum to the extent of these two specimens.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn writes:—"I have seen them on the wing in this county, and a very pretty sight it was."





WHOOPER SWAN. *Cygnus musicus*, Bechstein.

“Elk,” “Whistling Swan,” “Wild Swan.”

An uncommon winter visitant.—Mr Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 69) said of this species:—“*Cygnus ferus*. Whistling Swan. Seen at Bardon, by Mr. Grundy, formerly. One killed near Wanlip Hall was added, by the Dowager Lady Palmer, to Mr. Gisborne’s extensive collection at Yoxall Lodge; and I hear from Mr. Bloxam, that another has been killed at Groby.” Harley wrote:—“It has occurred on the Soar at Loughborough, and also at Groby Pool, as I learn from Mr. Chaplin. W. Chaplin died on 20th October, 1855.” Mr. W. Brookes, of Croft, writes me that, in the winter of 1870-1, ten Wild Swans came on to the flooded meadows below Narborough, where one or two of them were shot. He says:—“I went out one morning in a very thick fog, and got near them on the floods above Croft, in the direction of Sapcote. I fired at them, and they rose into the air and flew about in various directions. I ran forward, and stood under a bush by the river-side and killed two as they passed me. Soon afterwards, they all went away but one, which we supposed was wounded, and that remained for a good while, till one day it was with some Geese just below the village (Croft), when all the guns in the place were turned out and we surrounded the field, and Mr. James Pratt of Croft killed it.” Mr. Brookes adds that one of the birds which he killed weighed 19 lbs., the other, he believes, 17 lbs.

In RUTLAND.—The Earl of Gainsborough writes:—“Reported to have been seen at Luffenham, by Mr. H. Bromley, in 1885.”

COMMON SHELDRAKE. *Tadorna cornuta* (S. G. Gmelin).

“Bar-Gander,” “Burrow-Duck,” “Shield-Duck,” “Shell-Duck.”

Of accidental occurrence.—Mr. Macaulay records (‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1882, p. 78):—“Three were shot at Barkby in 1880, and I saw one of them, a male, in the possession of a bird-stuffer named Donnell.” The date, however, should be February, 1881, when I saw the bird in question, which was a young male.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire, this handsomely plumaged Duck is but of accidental occurrence.—Lord Gainsborough told me that, in September, 1887, he saw a Duck flying over Exton Park, which appeared to be of this species; and this was probably the case, as Masters was fortunate enough to shoot a female on Burley Ponds on 14th Dec., 1888.

WIGEON. *Mareca penelope* (Linnæus).

“Smee,” “Whew Duck.”

A winter visitant. Not uncommon on the rivers Soar and Trent, as well as on large sheets of water such as Saddington and Knipton Reservoirs.—On

28th April, 1886, two were procured at Belvoir ; both were males—one a beautiful adult, the other immature,—and are now in the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—The Earl of Gainsborough reports that it is occasionally seen on the ponds in Exton Park, and Mr. Horn informs me that it sometimes visits the Welland Valley. Masters sent me a female in the interesting stage of autumnal plumage, shot by him on 13th Oct., 1888, at which time he also shot another, apparently younger.

PINTAIL. *Dafila acuta* (Linnæus).

An uncommon winter visitant.—Harley recorded that Chaplin shot a fine pair in female attire, on the banks of Groby Pool, in November, 1845, and that during the year, several other examples were shot in various parts of the county. Mr. John Hunt, formerly of Leicester, informed me that sometime about 1880, he shot one at Kilby Bridge.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I have seen a splendid male specimen in the possession of C. Masters, which was shot by him at Burley Ponds, in December, 1883.

WILD DUCK. *Anas boscas* (Linnæus).

“Mallard” (male).

Resident, and generally distributed.—I shot one (a female) within two fields of the tram-line, at Aylestone, 23rd Jan., 1886.

Harley records that, in his youth, he saw a nest built in the crown of a pollard willow, in a small, marshy meadow by the brook which falls into the Soar near Loughborough. After the young were hatched, the female was observed to induce them to leave the tree by emitting a shrill cry, and, reaching the ground in safety, the little ones were led away by the mother to the adjacent brook.

Mr. T. Groves asserts that he saw a Duck sitting on a clutch of eleven eggs deposited in an oak-tree, at a height of ten feet from the ground, in Bradgate Park, in 1881. In the spring of 1887, a female bird (apparently, as I am informed, of this species) joined some tame “Aylesburys” belonging to Mr. Kellett, on the Soar, which flows past his house on the Aylestone Road, and, after some time, became sufficiently tame to go with them into the fowl-house each night. It never, however, availed itself of the ladder up which the other Ducks waddled from the water, but always *flew* from the water into the garden. It went away several times, but ultimately made a nest in a willow-tree on the river, close to the main tram-road, and laid eggs; but as, unfortunately, both eggs and bird disappeared one night, it was thought to have been killed or stolen.

The Wild Duck is seldom absent from the Belvoir Lake, or Reservoir, where it breeds regularly, as it does also at Rolleston and Saddington.







Harley wrote:—"I have also to record the capture of an exceedingly beautiful Mallard, met with at Ullesthorpe in this county in a wild state, which bore all the marks of hybridity," but he did not describe its appearance. From what he had previously written, however, I should assume he intended to convey the idea that it was a hybrid between the Wild Duck and the Muscovy Duck.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.

GARGANEY. *Querquedula circia* (Linnæus).

"Summer Teal."

A rare summer visitant.—It is here included on the authority of Mr. Macaulay, who (see 'Mid Nat.', 1881, p. 256) shot four (at one shot) at Saddington Reservoir, in July, 1868. Unfortunately, so little interest attached to these specimens that they were all eaten, and no feather remains to "point a moral or adorn a tale."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I was fortunate enough, in September, 1888, to see a wing in the possession of C. Masters, which I recognised as belonging to this species. Masters told me that it belonged to one of four specimens which he shot on Burley Ponds in August, 1887.

COMMON TEAL. *Querquedula crecca* (Linnæus).

Resident, but sparingly distributed.—Mr. Macaulay records ('Mid Nat.', 1882, p. 11)—"I have shot them on Saddington Reservoir, and out of the river Welland." Mr. Ingram writes:—"Visits the Knipton Reservoir, and the lakes at Belvoir." Mr. W. A. Vice, M.B., of Blaby Mills, shewed me a specimen shot on the mill-stream, and I have also seen a fine male, shot by Mr. Bevans, some years ago, at the Abbey Meadow.

In the spring of 1825, Harley came across a brood, in a pond choked with rushes and sedges, near Dishley Mill. The nest, composed of rushes and grass and lined with down, was carefully concealed beneath a small shrub which overhung the pond. Both parents assisted in the care of the young. In 1844 there was another nest of this species on the banks of Groby Pool, where the young, seven in number, came abroad early in the month of June.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—One (a male) was presented to the Leicester Museum, in February, 1886, by Mr. Horn, who informs me that this species is frequently seen and shot during the winter, and that it bred in a pond at Martinthorpe about 1884 and 1885.

SHOVELLER. *Spatula clypeata* (Linnæus).

A rare winter visitant.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 69) wrote:—"Killed near Charnwood Heath. In the collection at Yoxall Lodge." Harley remarked that, in his day, the Shoveller occurred on most of our large pools

and waters, as for example, Groby and Barratt, usually during severe weather; and further added:—"Shot on Groby Pool by Chaplin." Col. Palmer, of Withcote Hall, informs me that he possesses a mounted specimen, shot on the pool there in the winter of 1850. Mr. Macaulay records ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 79) that the "Rev. A. Matthews, some years since, got two at one shot, at Gumley." The late Mr. Widdowson's diary records one killed at Syston, 29th Sept., 1868. Mr. W. Whitaker, of Wistow Grange, wrote me that he killed one on Thornton Reservoir, in August, 1878. Mr. W. A. Vice shewed me a fine female specimen, shot on the mill-stream, Blaby, about 1879.

In RUTLAND.—A rare winter visitant.—C. Masters states that several have been killed at Burley Ponds, the three last—young birds—in August, 1887. One of these, which I have seen, is in the possession of Mr. G. H. Finch, and is a handsome young male in patched plumage.

TUFTED DUCK. *Fuligula cristata* (Leach).

"Crested Pochard," "Tufted Pochard," "Tufted Scaup."

Not uncommon in winter, but does not appear to remain to breed.—Mr. Babington (Supplement 'Potter') stated that it had been shot at Groby, by Lord Stamford's keeper. Harley recorded that it had been killed frequently on the River Soar, as well as upon several large pools in the county, and that, in the winter of 1840, it appeared in small flocks. On Groby Pool Chaplin shot many examples, and Harley was assured that it was found, no less abundantly, in other localities. Again, in March, 1845, several were seen on the Soar and other streams. The thermometer on the 11th and 12th of that month fell to ten degrees Fahrenheit, and in some localities to three degrees below zero—a degree of cold not experienced, he remarked, since 1838. At Groby Pool the wild fowl tarried late, but on the break up of the frost, on the 14th of the month, they disappeared entirely. Sir George Beaumont wrote to Mr. Macaulay that one was killed at Coleorton Hall in 1865. Mr. Macaulay shot one at Saddington Reservoir on 2nd Dec., 1880, and records ('Mid. Nat.', 1883, p. 85) that one was killed by Lord Boyle at the Reservoir, on 11th Jan., 1882. Mr. Ingram writes:—"Specimen shot on the Belvoir Lake in winter," and one (a male) was sent by him to the Museum, shot by the keeper, 19th June, 1884. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote:—"Plentiful some years ago. Several shot at Little Dalby." I saw a mounted specimen (male), in 1888, in the possession of Mr. H. C. Woodcock, who informed me that it was shot on the Wreake, at Syston, many years ago, by his keeper. A female in the flesh was kindly presented to the Museum by Mr. John Burgess, who shot it at Saddington Reservoir, on 31st Oct., 1887. Its weight was 1 lb. 5 oz.; total length  $15\frac{1}{2}$  inches, colour of irides dark yellowish-brown; legs and toes light lead-colour inclining to silvery-grey,





darker at joints. Mr. G. H. Storer saw a small flock, on 21st May, 1888, at Cropston Reservoir.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough remarks that it is seen every year on the ponds in Exton Park, often six or eight together, and I have seen one in his Lordship's possession which was procured there. C. Masters reports that several have been killed at Burley Ponds, the last being in Oct., 1887. Two of these I have seen; one—a fine male—in the possession of Mr. Finch, and the other—also an adult male—in the possession of Masters.

SCAUP. *Fuligula marila* (Linnæus).

A winter visitant, rarer than the last.—One was shot on Saddington Reservoir in 1874, by Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 79). I saw a mounted specimen (male), in 1888, in the collection of Mr. H. C. Woodcock, who informed me that it was shot on the Wreake, at Rearsby, many years ago, by his keeper.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough records one, a male, occurring on Burley Ponds. Part of this (a fully adult male) I have since seen in the possession of Masters, who told me that he shot it about 1878-80. At about the same time and place he also shot an extraordinarily fine female, which I have seen in the collection of Mr. G. H. Finch; and further, I was pleased to receive from Masters a fine pair, which he shot on Burley Ponds, 8th Nov., 1888. The female, like the last, was in very fine plumage, but not quite so large. Its weight was  $2\frac{1}{4}$  lbs.; length  $18\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The male weighed  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lbs.; was  $19\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length, and was in a most interesting stage of plumage, having the brown head and neck, and the freckled brown mantle and upper breast of the autumn dress.

POCHARD. *Fuligula ferina* (Linnæus).

"Dunbird," "Poker-Duck" (a corruption).

A winter visitant, occurring occasionally.—Harley observed that the species was met with on Groby Pool, and other waters in different parts of the county, in the winter of 1841-2. He also stated that Mr. Babington's MS. notes contain a record of the occurrence of this bird at Kegworth. The late Mr. Widdowson's diary records one killed at Leesthorpe, on 29th June, 1867. Mr. Macaulay reports one shot at Thornton Reservoir in 1883. The Rev. G. D. Armitage writes me that, on 8th Feb., 1884, "seven came to the mill-dam at Broughton Astley, and five were shot by Mr. C. W. Berridge, who has one male bird now stuffed." A male Pochard shot at Saddington Reservoir, 15th Jan., 1886, by Mr. A. K. Perkins, and presented by him to the Museum, weighed 2 lbs. 1 oz.

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it is “a pretty constant visitant to the ponds in Exton Park, but is less common than the Tufted Duck.” C. Masters states that it is often killed at Barley Ponds, and I saw one in his possession—a nice male—shot at Burley about 1883.

GOLDENEYE. *Clangula glaucion* (Linnæus).

“Golden-eyed Garrot.”

An uncommon winter visitant.—Mr. Babington (Supplement ‘Potter’) wrote :—“Killed at Groby, by the keeper of the Earl of Stamford, and also in Loughborough meadows.” Harley recorded that, during the severe winter of 1845, it appeared in the county in pretty fair numbers, several examples being obtained at Groby Pool. He was informed that it also occurred rather numerous in many other districts, and stated that it occurred at Groby Pool, Bosworth, Saddington, and elsewhere, during the winter months. I have seen a fine female specimen in the possession of T. W. Tebbs, of the Union Inn, Blaby, shot by him at the “Big brook,” Blaby, in the winter of 1880. John Ryder sent to the Museum a beautiful adult male specimen, shot on the lake at Belvoir, 28th Oct., 1885.

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough says it is seen on the ponds in Exton Park, but is not common. Masters informs me that one was killed at Burley Ponds, in December, 1880.

The Rev. J. Birch Reynardson, of Careby Rectory, Stamford, in an interesting letter upon the habits of certain Ducks, writes me about this bird :—“A wonderful fellow for catching fish. I have seen him come up from diving, with a Gudgeon taken cross-ways in his bill, and then throw it in the air, catch it by the *head* and swallow it.”

HARLEQUIN DUCK. *Cosmonetta histrionica* (Linnæus).

Of this very rare straggler to the British Isles, Harley wrote :—“1845.—The appearance of this rare bird in the county of Leicester, I record with much satisfaction, and I am enabled to do so on the authority of Mr. Chaplin,\* of Groby, who shot a pair of Harlequin Ducks on the pool during the inclement season of the early months of the year which we have so recently experienced. These two rare visitants were associated with Scoters, Tufted Ducks, Teals, and Wigeons, and it must be observed that the manifest difference in the plumage of the birds, so remarkably diverse from their companions, led to their capture,

\* Chaplin was the keeper at Groby then, and appears to have been a man of discernment ; still, to those who know how few keepers there are who properly discriminate between closely allied forms, it will always be a matter of conjecture whether he had mistaken the species, only three specimens (said to have been killed in Britain) being known (see Mr. Howard Saunders, F.L.S., F.Z.S., pp. 319-20, ‘P.Z.S.’, 1887).







as I have already intimated." I have, ere this, heard several Ducks styled "Harlequin," the last time the term being applied to the by-no-means-common Long-tailed Duck.

COMMON SCOTER. *Ædemia nigra* (Linnæus).

"Black Duck."

A not uncommon winter visitant.—Harley wrote:—"Chaplin has met with the species on Groby Pool." The late Mr. Widdowson wrote:—"I shot one at Melton; now in 'Bickley Collection.'" It has also occurred more than once at Bosworth Park, as I am informed by Henry Long, the keeper. Mr. J. Whitaker obligingly writes me that he possesses two adult males, shot out of a flock at Thornton Reservoir, 18th Sept., 1879, by Dr. John Wright (since deceased), of Markfield (see 'Zool,' 1879, p. 459).

Mr. Macaulay records ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 79):—"Not unfrequently driven in by the easterly gales." During August and September, 1881, three were obtained at Saddington, one of which (a male) he shot, on 3rd Sept., out of a flock of twenty, and presented to the Museum. One was purchased for the Museum, said to have been shot near the Abbey Meadow, Leicester, on 9th Feb., 1882.

GOOSANDER. *Mergus merganser*, Linnæus.

A rare winter visitant.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 70) noticed one, shot near Langley Priory, in the possession of R. Cheslyn, Esq., and Mr. Macaulay records ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 79):—"A female specimen was killed on the Smeeton Canal in 1862, by Mr. A. Hildebrand."

The Museum possesses a fine male in adult plumage, shot near Blaby, 17th Dec., 1875, and presented by Mr. William Gregory.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER. *Mergus serrator*, Linnæus.

"Sawbill."

A rare winter visitant.—One, shot on the pool at Coleorton Hall about 1860, is recorded by Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 79). It is preserved in the collection of Sir G. Beaumont.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough writes:—"Two immature specimens shot at Burley Ponds by C. Masters, about 1878, now in possession of Mr. W. C. Morris, of Oakham.\* Reported also from Holywell by Rev. J. B. Reynardson, and one shot on the Welland, near Ketton, now in the collection of Mr. C. O. Eaton, of Toilethorpe."

\* Masters informs me that he killed three, of which Mr. Morris had two; he does not remember what became of the other.

SMEW. *Mergus albellus*, Linnæus.

A rare winter visitant.—Harley wrote :—"The Smew occasionally occurs. The species appeared in the county during the severe, boisterous weather of the months of February and March, 1845. It was frequently met with in the society of Scoters, Pochards, and Wigeon." He further added :—"Occurred at Groby Pool, and also on the Trent." Mr. H. C. Woodcock, of Rearsby, shewed me a fine male Smew, in fully adult plumage, which he assured me was shot by himself on the River Eye, in or near Wyfordby, in March, 1846. At the same time he shewed me a female which the late David North told him he had shot at Syston shortly afterwards. Mr. J. Whitaker, of Rainworth Lodge, Mansfield, has an adult male, shot at Thornton Reservoir in 1877 (see 'Zool.,' 1884, p. 52).

## ORDER COLUMBÆ.

### FAMILY COLUMBIDÆ.

RING-DOVE. *Columba palumbus*, Linnæus.

"Wood-Pigeon," "Queest" = "Cushat."

Resident, and generally distributed.—In the crop of a Wood-Pigeon presented to the Museum by Mr. J. S. Ellis, on 3rd Jan., 1882, sixty-one acorns were found.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.

STOCK-DOVE. *Columba ænas*, Linnæus.

"Blue Rock" (by error).

Resident, but not so common as the Wood-Pigeon.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68) wrote :—"Mr. Grundy has shot 'Rock Doves' at Bardon many years back, which he thought came from the Vale of Belvoir. This would probably not be *C. livia*, but *C. ænas*, which is still common in Bradgate Park, as I learn from Mr. Bloxam." Mr. H. L. Powys-Keck informs me that it is common at Cotesbach in Leicestershire.

Remarking upon the claim of *C. livia* to be identified with the fauna of the county, Harley stated that, formerly, he, in common with others, believed that the Rock-Dove frequented Charnwood, building annually in fissures of the slate rocks, but that "subsequent knowledge dissipated such conclusions," the mistake arising from the prevalence of the Stock-Dove. This also, he recorded, bred in fissures of rocks at "The Brand," in the spring of 1854—an unusual habit for this bird, which, in wooded districts, breeds in hollow trees, as also described by Harley, who, on 21st April, 1840, met with a nest in an aged oak pollard near the centre of Bradgate Park. The nest was placed upon a decayed part of the tree about two feet deep within the bole, the entrance to the nest being at a spot where a huge arm had been swept off suddenly by tempest. I, also, have seen it nesting in





hollow trees, at Knighton, from whence I procured two young birds for the Museum, by the kindness of Mr. J. S. Ellis, on 6th Sept., 1882.

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—The Earl of Gainsborough writes ('Zoologist,' 1888, p. 305) that, on 7th June, 1888, when driving to Pickworth, he saw as many as eleven on the ground in one field. Mr. Horn reports having taken the eggs so early as March.

TURTLE DOVE. *Turtur communis*, Selby.

“Wickin Dove.”

A summer visitant, sparingly distributed and remaining to breed.—Harley remarked upon its comparative rarity in the county, and appeared to think it had not bred. In May, 1881, I saw a pair several times in the Rectory garden at Aylestone, and concluded from their actions, that they had a nest in the vicinity. Since then I have seen single birds in various parts of the county, and have more than once heard the peculiar “purring” coo so characteristic of the species.

Mr. Davenport found a nest, in June, 1878, in a spinney near Tilton, and another at Ashlands in June, 1884. Mr. G. H. Storer, who saw a pair near Arnesby in 1888, was informed that it bred there.

IN RUTLAND.—Mr. Horn writes:—“Not uncommon. We find several nests every year.”

PASSENGER PIGEON. *Ectopistes migratorius* (Linnæus).

A very rare straggler from the Nearctic Region.—The late Mr. Widdowson wrote:—“One killed in Scalford village street some years ago. The same year I saw accounts of several killed near Liverpool,” but, as there is no doubt that the latter examples had escaped from confinement, it is highly probable that the Leicestershire specimen may have been one of the same company.

## ORDER PTEROCLETES.

### FAMILY PTEROCLIDÆ.

PALLAS'S SAND-GROUSE. *Syrhaptes paradoxus* (Pallas).

A very rare and irregular visitant to Britain, from Central Asia, but unusually common during 1888.—Mr. Macaulay thinks he saw a small flock of these birds, whilst driving between Saddington and Mowsley, on 23rd May, 1888; and Mr. G. H. Storer gives me the following interesting communication:—

“On Friday, June 8th, I visited my friend Mr. F. F. How at Swithland, where he was staying for a short time, and from him first heard of certain birds which had been seen in the neighbourhood, and which, after careful enquiry, I feel

convinced must have been Pallas's Sand-Grouse. He told me that, on the Sunday previous, June 3rd, in company with two ladies and one gentleman, he was walking in fields belonging to Mr. Bates of Swithland, when he saw a small flock of birds rise from a field of young barley, and which, from their size, his friend thought might possibly be a very early covey of Red-legged Partridges. Mr. How, from the great length of wing and strength of the birds, judged them to be some kind of sea-bird allied to the Terns, which might have strayed from Cropston, where such birds are not unfrequently seen. The birds flew over into fields belonging to Mr. Pepper.

"Mr. How informed me that Green, waggoner to Mr. Bates, had also seen them, and to him we accordingly went. From Green we learnt that on Tuesday, June 5th, whilst ploughing, a flock of twelve birds had alighted in the field and come within a few yards of him at his work, without evincing the least alarm. They appeared to be searching for grubs or worms, and kept so much together that Green assured me seven out of the twelve could easily have been killed at one shot. He described them as of a light brown colour, with very long wings, feet feathered to the toes, and a black patch above the legs. Green was very particular about this black patch. 'They did not hop, nor run like a Starling, but walked.' So near did they come that Green was tempted into throwing at them. The twelve immediately arose, uttering a curious chuckling noise, and flew over into Mr. Pepper's land. In conclusion Green said that 'they were the prettiest kind of bird he ever see, more like foreign birds than any he'd seen in them parts.'

"The next day to that on which Green saw them, they appeared at Kinchley Hill Farm, belonging to Mr. Bates, near Buddon Wood, where they were fired at by his man 'Joe,' who, I am sorry to say, says he wounded one, but not fatally. The flock flew away, and although a keen look-out has been kept for them since, they have not again been seen, so that I think it very probable they have altogether deserted the district.

"The land on which all the observers have noticed them lies between the village of Swithland and Buddon Wood, and although Mr. How and myself carefully worked the whole district on Friday, our search was unsuccessful, and, since Wednesday, June 6th, they have not again appeared. From the evidence collected, I am convinced that the birds could have been nothing else but *Syrhaptes paradoxus*, and in this conclusion I think you will agree with me."

IN RUTLAND.—Unlike my record for Leicestershire, I am enabled to point to a specimen, actually obtained, of this rare and interesting straggler, which I saw in the possession of the Right Hon. Gerard Noel, of Catmose, Oakham,—a nice specimen (though shockingly mounted) which was shot by Mr. Noel's keeper at Cottesmore, on 30th May, 1888. Masters writes me that he saw four Sand-Grouse flying close together at Burley, on 29th Dec., 1888, and he, being a good observer, is not likely to have been mistaken.









PALLAS'S SAND-GROUSE.

*SYRRHAPTES PARADOXUS* (PALLAS).



## ORDER GALLINÆ.

## FAMILY PHASIANIDÆ.

PHEASANT. *Phasianus colchicus* (Linnæus).

“Bohemian Pheasant” (variety), “Ring-necked Pheasant.”

Probably introduced from Asia Minor by the Romans, but now resident and commonly distributed as a naturalized game-bird.—Major Gregory Knight informed me that he had a Pheasant sitting on ten eggs on 12th Sept., 1888. This would, no doubt, be owing to the extraordinarily inclement and late season.

Subject to much variation, owing to the crossing of the original stock with various foreign species, especially with the Chinese Ring-necked Pheasant, *Phasianus torquatus* (Gmelin), originally introduced from China some hundred or so years ago, and which has interbred with the collarless, or “Old English,” Pheasant to such an extent that it is now impossible to find either pure, except in China and Asia Minor respectively. What we must now term the ring-necked variety is undoubtedly the most common. Harley stated that this bird was introduced into the county in his day, but probably this was an error, and he appeared to think that it came originally from Bohemia, as he wrote:—“The species, or variety, which the author has here indicated, is said to be Bohemian, and a native of the forests of that part of Europe.” I believe it has been, for some considerable time, quite wild in parts of Bohemia, but it certainly was not indigenous there. Probably Harley referred to the pale buff-coloured variety, such as we have in the “Bickley Collection,” and which, though known as the “Bohemian” Pheasant, has nothing to do with the implied locality. Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 68), stated that hybrids between Pheasant and Fowl occasionally occur in Birchwood, near Charley. Lord Ferrers has, at Staunton, two hybrids between Pheasant and Grey Hen; they were bred in South Wood, and strayed into one of the Staunton woods, where the keeper shot them. Sir Arthur Hazlerigg shot at Noseley, some years since, a pure white variety, which I have, by his permission, examined.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—The most beautiful variety I have ever seen is in the possession of the Earl of Gainsborough. It is of enormous size, half as large again as an ordinary Pheasant, and of most striking and singular plumage. The head is dusky-green; the breast Pheasant or Fowl-like; thighs of the normal colour (very large); the mantle, back, and tail are like those of the Silver Pheasant. It was bred from imported eggs, and shot, many years ago, at Exton Park.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE. *Caccabis rufa* (Linnæus).

Resident, but sparingly distributed.—The call of this bird is quite different from that of the common Partridge, and is expressed by “Chuk, Chuk, Chukar,

Chukar," with a suspicion of a creaking gate about it. "Handsome is, as handsome does," and so this bird's beautiful plumage does not save him from the well-merited anathemas his running and skulking proclivities call down upon him, and great is the joy when a covey is taken by surprise and "rights and lefts" can be brought to bear upon the "red-legs." The only time I have seen this bird in Leicestershire was during September, 1887, around Saddington gorse, where Mr. Macaulay and I, day by day, unsuccessfully *stalked* a large covey of some twenty or more birds, and it was not until the 27th that I got a shot and floored a young male, saying, as I held it up, to Mr. Macaulay, "and his bick is more red, and his *foliage* is more bewtiful"!

In RUTLAND.—Resident, and Mr. Horn wrote that in 1887 they were said to be more numerous in the neighbourhood of Uppingham than the ordinary Partridge, which is certainly phenomenal if Mr. Horn was not misinformed. At any rate Lord Gainsborough corroborates Mr. Horn so far as to write:—"It appears to be increasing in Rutland." I *saw* a covey whilst shooting at Exton Park, on 4th Sept., 1887.

#### BARBARY PARTRIDGE. *Caccabis petrosa* (Gmelin).

In April, 1842, a specimen of this Partridge was picked up dead at Edmondthorpe, near Melton Mowbray (see Yarrell's 'Hist. Brit. Birds,' 4th ed., vol. iii., p. 121). The late Mr. Widdowson wrote me that he had this very specimen in his possession, and it was from this bird that Yarrell's figure of the species was taken.

#### PARTRIDGE. *Perdix cinerea* (Latham).

Resident and common.—The 'Leicester Daily Post' recorded that just after the great storm of the 18th and 19th Jan., 1881, a bricklayer captured a Partridge in a hole of the damaged roof of a house in Lower Bond Street, Leicester. A still more curious circumstance is recorded by Mr. Davenport, who wrote, on 11th Dec., 1885:—"I know of a covey of seven cocks and one hen reared this summer under a hen Fowl on Mr. G. V. Braithwaite's estate at Stackley, which now come out of the fields to a whistle, and are so tame as to feed out of the hand and perch on the shoulder of the lady of the house." Writing again on 1st Feb., 1886, he said:—"Those Partridges, reduced by one cock, come every morning to be fed, just as they did in September—a marvellous sight." The 'Leicester Journal' of 27th Jan., 1888, contained the following:—"On Tuesday morning a live Partridge was observed on the Humberstone Road, near the London and North-Western goods depôt, having apparently come over the railway from the direction of Evington. It ran off towards Brunswick Street, where it was caught by Mr. Andrew Birtles, of Upper Charnwood Street, who succeeded in throwing his hat over it. The bird was a fine one, and in good condition." Mr. Birtles informs me, since then, that he kept it alive for three months, but, as it was very wild, he had it killed and preserved.









Potter (Appendix, p. 68) added the following as a foot-note to Mr. Babington's ornithological list:—"It may be added, on the authority of Charles March Phillipps, Esq., that a variety of Partridge, with white-breasted horse-shoes, is still met with on Charnwood: and, so far as that gentleman has been able to learn, there only.—T. R. P." Although I mention this, I must confess I do not understand what is meant by "white-breasted horse-shoes," and can only conclude that, as usual when Potter touched ornithological subjects, he muddled up his information in some extraordinary manner. Mr. T. Woodcock, of Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, wrote me on 3rd Sept., 1885, that there were three white Partridges, in a covey of nine or ten, on the Garthorpe estate, near Melton Mowbray; and Mr. James T. Hincks told me in November, 1887, that there was still an old white one left, which was extremely shy, and had, until then, escaped. I saw a curious, light, sandy variety, in the possession of Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, shot at Noseley many years ago.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I saw, in the possession of C. Masters, a peculiar, light, cold-grey variety, without any admixture of brown, one of two which were shot at Burley about 1885.

QUAIL. *Coturnix communis*, Bonnaterre.

A rare summer visitant.—Mr. Babington, writing in 1842 (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68), said:—"Several killed one season between Whitwick and Bardon, some years ago, by Mr. Grundy, who kept a wounded bird alive for some time." Harley wrote:—"Its visits are only irregular and uncertain, and appear confined to meadow-lands and fields lying contiguous to our streams. On the banks of the Soar, and the meadows abutting thereupon, the Quail is annually no stranger. It breeds there in small numbers. Cossington, Barrow, Sileby, Thurcaston and some other villages having low, wet, meadows adjoining thereunto, yearly have visits made by this pretty little rasorial bird,"—and further:—"A Quail was captured in the Market-place, Leicester, on the evening of 15th Nov., 1846. A second example was shot on Mr. Winstanley's estate at Braunstone, on 20th Nov. of the same year." Mr. J. Garle Browne, of Leamington, writes me that, in 1845, he killed five Quails out of a bevy of nine, which he flushed and marked down close to Husbands Bosworth, and, on 24th Dec., 1856, he flushed one at Edmondthorpe. Mr. H. C. Woodcock, of Rearsby, wrote me, in 1888:—"I have a Quail which was killed on the railway, by the telegraph wires passing through my farm. One year there was a bevy on a farm in this parish in my occupation, and most of them were killed by a friend of mine. I am not sure, but believe the date of both was 1865. I have been often told that Quails bred on the Queniborough sand-lands, but never met with any." Mr. Davenport informs me that his father shot Quail at Tilton in September, 1867. Mr. Macaulay informed me that Mr. R. Symington, of Market Harborough, shot a Quail at Great Bowden, in Sept., 1872, which was, unfortunately, not preserved.

Mr. Ingram thinks it occasionally breeds in the Vale of Belvoir, as he has shot immature birds there with others. According to the late Mr. Widdowson, it has often been found, and breeding, near Melton Mowbray, and I saw in 1885, in the Melton Mowbray Museum, a case containing a pair of Quails, a chick, and eggs, and labelled:—"Presented by Plumpton Wilson, Jan., 1847." This was, no doubt, the *Rev. Plumpton Wilson*.

In RUTLAND.—A rare summer visitant, but appears to be more common than in Leicestershire.—The Earl of Gainsborough reports one seen at Exton, in 1884, and three were seen at Whitwell, on 21st Oct., 1884, of which one was shot by Mr. Maurice Berkeley, of Spetchley Park, when shooting with his Lordship, who also reports it as having occurred at Ayston, Burley-on-the-Hill, Preston, Ridlington, Seaton and Thistleton. Mr. Lucas Calcraft writes:—"Odd ones seen most Septembers," and Mr. Horn informs me that Mr. Wortley shot two on 1st Sept., 1885, at Ridlington. The same gentleman, he says, heard one calling in his fields on 7th June, 1886. Lord Gainsborough recorded, in 'The Field' of 9th Feb., 1889 (p. 190), that one was shot at Eggleton, the first week in January, 1889, by C. Masters.

## FAMILY TETRAONIDÆ.

RED GROUSE. *Lagopus scoticus* (Latham).

Formerly occurred, but is now extinct in the counties.—Mr. Babington wrote, in 1842 (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68):—"A brood at Tin Meadows, twenty years ago, some of which were shot by Mr. Grundy, when in search of Black Game. Since then Mr. Gisborne attempted to introduce the bird from Scotland and the Derbyshire moors, but without success, it being unable to bear the dust of the journey, as the gamekeeper thought." Harley wrote:—"Well nigh become extinct," and again:—"The Red Ptarmigan occurs in the county in much about the same ratio, as regards its distribution and its numerical diffusion, as its congener the Black Grouse. This species of Ptarmigan, moreover, appears to affect alike the same locality—Charnwood Forest—a situation as yet the only one known to the author where it occurs in the county." One was shot by the Rev. J. C. Davenport at Skeffington, in the winter of 1860, whilst it was feeding on some hips on a hedge. I saw a mounted specimen at Noseley, which had been shot there by Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, some years before, whilst it was sitting on a whitethorn eating the haws. It had been previously observed sitting on the top of a large ash tree!

BLACK GROUSE. *Tetrao tetrix*, Linnæus.

"Grey Hen" (female).

No longer met with in the county.—Mr. Babington, writing in 1842 (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 68), said:—"Near Charnwood Heath, Sharpley, etc., in tolerable numbers till the last two years. They are now nearly extinct."





Harley wrote:—"We meet with this fine bird on the summits and flanks of Charnwood Forest. The species breeds there annually, but in sparing numbers only, since the ancient forest exists only in small patches of a few hundred acres in extent; consequently, the range of the Black Grouse is circumscribed to such spots. On the flanks of the wild hills overlying the lordship of Whitwick there remain a few birds still protected, notwithstanding the very limited geographical range assigned by nature to such denizens; but the husbandman is already making such rapid strides, year after year, on the native wilds of the Black Cock and its congener, that it is pretty certain it must cease to exist there long before the present century terminates.—1844, December 31st.—Saw to-day, at a poulterer's door (Payne's), two fine specimens of Black Grouse which had been shot on Charnwood Forest near unto the Monastery." Harley appears to have last met with the species in the spring of 1850. Mr. J. B. Ellis writes:—"Now extinct; used to live in large woods by Bensliff." Sir G. Beaumont wrote to Mr. Macaulay, that he remembered killing Black Game on Charnwood Forest about 1847 or 1848, and during the next ten years he shot several "Grey Hens" in South Wood, near Coleorton. The late Mr. Alfred Ellis, in his 'Notes about Birds,' published for private circulation in 1868, wrote:—"Some years since, I had the great pleasure of a day's shooting with the late Mr. Gisborne, and, as we strolled over the heathery waste, we flushed several of these birds, and one grand old cock got up so close under the walls of the Monastery that we could not shoot him, if we had wished, without danger to the windows."

In RUTLAND.—No longer met with in the county.—Mr. Finch shewed me a "Grey Hen" which was shot in Burley Wood, in January, 1851.

## ORDER FULICARIÆ.

### FAMILY RALLIDÆ.

WATER-RAIL. *Rallus aquaticus*, Linnæus.

"Velvet Runner."

Resident, but sparingly distributed, and, from its skulking habits, is thought to be much rarer than it really is.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter') stated that it occurred at Thringstone, Rothley Temple, etc. Mr. Macaulay, I believe, has shot it at Saddington. Mr. Thos. Woodcock shot one (a male) at Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, on 12th Oct., 1885, and presented it to the Museum. I have seen a specimen in the possession of Mr. Samuel Bevans, shot by him in the Abbey Meadow some years ago, and two in the possession of Mr. W. Underwood, one of which was shot by him at Aylestone in February, 1886, the other at John O'Gaunt on 19th Jan., 1888.



In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I saw two run from a brook in Exton Park on 15th Sept., 1887, and Lord Gainsborough informs me that it has also been seen at Horne, Tolethorpe, and Ridlington.

SPOTTED CRAKE. *Porzana maruetta* (Leach).

Sparingly distributed; probably breeding.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 69) said:—"Near Leicester." According to Harley, it was very common during the summer of 1842. In many localities throughout the Midlands it appeared in numbers, but nowhere in Leicestershire was it met with in greater abundance than in the meadows and fields near the Soar, and from Loughborough to Kegworth it was plentiful. Mr. H. C. Woodcock shewed me a specimen, which he assured me he shot at Rearsby about 1846-50. Prior to the taking over of the Museum by the Corporation in 1849, there appears to have been a specimen from "meadows on banks of River Soar." I saw a nice example in the possession of Mr. J. Strickland Bevins, of Ingarsby Old Hall, shot by his father at Wellsborough about 1867-72. Mr. Samuel Bevans shewed me two, shot by him in the Abbey Meadow about 1878. One purchased by me from the late Mr. R. Widdowson for the Museum was obtained at Melton Mowbray, in October, 1881, and he also wrote me that it bred in that locality. I saw one in the hands of Turner, shot in the Abbey Meadow about 1882. Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 78) mentioned that he had killed three in his neighbourhood during the last twenty years, and he wrote me that he had shot another at Saddington Reservoir, on 15th Jan., 1884. He also informs me that one was shot about the same time, at Smeeton Brook, by Mr. John Peberdy. I saw one in the hands of Elkington, said to have been caught by a Dog at Birstall, 17th Oct., 1885.

In RUTLAND.—No report, but it doubtless occurs.

LITTLE CRAKE. *Porzana parva* (Scopoli).

Very rare, and the only record I have is that furnished by Harley, who states that one was shot near the town of Leicester in January, 1841, and was afterwards eaten!

CORN-CRAKE. *Crex pratensis*, Bechstein.

"Daker-hen," "Land-Rail."

A summer migrant, generally distributed, and breeding; remaining sometimes throughout the winter.

A nest containing nine eggs was found, in July, 1883, in a field close to the main thoroughfare by Aylestone Mill, and was purchased for the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.







MOOR-HEN. *Gallinula chloropus* (Linnæus).

“Water-hen.”

Resident and common; breeding within, and quite close to, Leicester.—Often flying at night with loud cries, as remarked by Harley, who wrote:—“On wing it emits, in its nocturnal flight, a quick, grating, uneasy cry, which may be heard some furlongs distant. The cry may be described as ‘tuck, tuck,’ repeated only at intervals wide apart.” The Museum Donation-book records, under date 23rd Feb., 1853, one presented by Mr. Dalby, shot at Ilston-on-the-Hill, “remarkable for being destitute of the slightest vestige of the hinder toes.”

On 26th April, 1885, Wilson, of the Aylestone Mill, brought me eight young ones just hatched, leaving another, which he lost. The colours of the bare places on their heads were very beautiful, glowing with cerulean blue and bright crimson. The following day I procured the nest, male, and female, for the Museum. These birds sometimes build away from water, or in branches of trees high up above the water, a fact noted in the ‘Zoologist,’ 1869, p. 1723, where it is stated that, at Stoughton Grange, on 23rd April of that year, a nest was found built on a tree-stump overgrown with ivy, about twenty-five feet above the water; it contained young ones, which tumbled into the water from that height on hearing the call of their parents.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.

COOT. *Fulica atra* (Linnæus).

“Bald Coot.”

Resident, but unevenly distributed.—Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 69) said:—“Groby Pool and Barret Pool.” One was shot by Mr. J. Grewcock, at Belgrave, close to Leicester, during a snowstorm on 23rd Jan., 1886.

Breeds at Bosworth, “Frog-hollow” Pond at Belvoir, Groby Pool, Saddington Reservoir, and other places in the county. The Museum contains a nest and five eggs taken at Saddington in June, 1885, and another nest with ten eggs which I obtained at the same place on 25th May, 1886. The Rev. John B. Reynardson, of Careby Rectory, Stamford, writing upon the habits of this bird, gives me the following note:—“I suppose you know, when the water is rising from flood, both birds will work hard with *leaves* and *grass* to raise the nest and save their eggs from being flooded. This interesting sight I have seen.”

I am not sure if it has ever been recorded that the male often, during the breeding season, arches his wings and ploughs through the water in exactly the same manner as the Swan. I am also uncertain whether this singular habit is due to his wishing to ingratiate himself with his partner, or as a mark of defiance to other males.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.

ORDER    **ALECTORIDES.**FAMILY   **GRUIDÆ.**CRANE.   *Grus communis*, Bechstein.

Harley recorded, of this very rare straggler to the British Isles, that "Mr. Chaplin, of Groby, shot an example on the banks of the pool in the year 1822." I have no corroboration of this, and it must be remembered that many keepers and some few sportsmen are in the habit of calling the Heron a "Crane," and, as Harley, amidst the mass of verbiage with which he delighted in surrounding his statements, did not state that he actually *saw* this specimen, the record must rest upon its merits.

ORDER    **LIMICOLÆ.**FAMILY   **ÆDIDNEMIDÆ.**STONE-CURLEW.   *Ædidenmus scolopax* (S. G. Gmelin).

"Great Plover," "Norfolk Plover," "Thick-knee." .

Formerly occurring as a summer migrant, but has not been observed for many years.—Harley, who considered its visits rare and localised, stated that it haunted the heath-lands at Saltby, and prevailed also on the open park-lands of Croxton-Kerrial and Waltham, and he appeared to think that its range was limited to such spots by the presence of certain food which it could not obtain elsewhere. The late Mr. Widdowson noted it as having bred annually, many years ago, at Stonesby Heath, but none had been observed there of late.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that it has been recorded at Holywell by J. Evans; that Mr. J. Montague of Melton Park, Doncaster, who formerly resided in Rutland, remembers frequently to have seen the Stone-Curlew about "Stamford Field" and high grounds above Ketton, between 1840-45, and that it has been recorded more recently at Aunby Heath by Rev. J. Reynardson. The Rev. Robert Hurt wrote me the following interesting particulars in July, 1886:—"Within the last three or four years I have known of a pair of 'Thick-kneed Plovers' on Ryhall Heath; the nest with two eggs was destroyed by a cultivator in a fallow field preparing for turnips. Within the last fifteen or twenty years I have known of six or eight pairs of the birds passing the summer on the Heath, as it is called, and have shot several of the young ones—middle or end of September, when Partridge-shooting in the turnips. Am not aware of any of the birds there *now*, as I have never heard their cry on riding past. There is no heather left there now, though the district is still called 'Ryhall Heath.'"





CREAM-COLOURED COURSER.

*CURSORIUS GALLICUS* (GMELIN).







## FAMILY GLAREOLIDÆ.

COLLARED PRATINCOLE. *Glareola pratincola* (Linnæus).

The only authority I have for including this bird in the present list is that contained in the MS. catalogue of the contents of the Museum when handed over to the Corporation on 19th June, 1849, wherein one is mentioned with the remark, "shot near Leicester."

## FAMILY CHARADRIIDÆ.

CREAM-COLOURED COURSER. *Cursorius gallicus* (Gmelin).

"Cream-coloured Swiftfoot."

A very rare autumnal straggler to Britain.—This scarce bird is figured from Selby in Potter's 'History of Charnwood Forest,' as a vignette to the Ornithology, at p. 65 of the Appendix, with the following remarks, at p. 69, by Mr. Babington:—"The third and last specimen found in Britain was killed near Timberwood Hill, October,\* 1827. It is in the collection of the Rev. Thomas Gisborne, of Yoxall Lodge, and was lent by him to Mr. Selby, for whose splendid work it was engraved. The specimen which was first found in Britain was sold to Donovan for 83 guineas, and is now in the British Museum." Mr. Gisborne's specimen was also figured by Bewick. Anxious, if possible, to obtain some particulars of so rare a bird, Harley wrote to the late Mr. Gisborne, author of 'Walks in a Forest,' in whose possession it was known to be, and received the following reply:—"Yoxall Lodge, Needwood Forest, July 4, 1840. The example of *Cursorius isabellinus*, respecting which you enquire, was shot on Charnwood Forest, near Timberwood Hill, in October, 1827, by a tenant of my eldest son. The tenant met my son incidentally directly afterward, and showed and gave the bird to him as an unknown curiosity; and my son, who was on his way to this neighbourhood, brought it forward to me.—Thomas Gisborne."

Dresser ('Birds of Europe') mentions the Leicestershire specimen as being the *fourth* obtained in Britain. According to Yarrell (4th Edition, Vol. III., p. 240) the present example is the *sixth* recorded for Britain, but the mistake has been made of placing the year 1828 before 1827, and we have to thank Mr. Harting's 'Handbook of British Birds,' which shews it to be the *fifth* noted as occurring in Britain, the previous four being:—One near Wingham, Kent (see Latham, 1787), in the British Museum. One, North Wales, 1793. One near Weatherby, April, 1816. One, Yorkshire, 1825. Since then some twenty or more examples have occurred. As neither the figure nor the description given by Selby is quite accurate, possibly the Plate (which I have copied, by kind permission of Mr. Dresser, from his beautiful work) may be of service.

\* The exact date was the 15th.

GOLDEN PLOVER.\* *Charadrius pluvialis*, Linnæus.

A winter visitant. Not common.—Harley remarked that the appearance of the Golden Plover in the county was chiefly confined to Charnwood Forest and the wild hills around. Occasionally, however, it was found on the meadows which fringe the River Soar, such as the meadows about Loughborough and Barrow. T. W. Tebbs, of the Union Inn, Blaby, shewed me one which he shot at Wigston, in 1854. Turner informs me that, sometime in 1865, he shot a Golden Plover in winter plumage, in the Abbey Meadow. I have seen, in the possession of Mr. J. S. Bevins, of Ingarsby Old Hall, a fine specimen which was shot by his father, at Wellsborough, about 1865-70. Mr. Macaulay recorded ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 65) that "Sir George Beaumont mentions its occurrence at Coleorton," and that "four were killed at Smeeton and one at Gumley some years since." Mr. Standbridge tells me that, about 1880, he saw and shot the Golden Plover at Aston Firs. Mr. Davenport says he shot one at Skeffington on 26th Dec., 1881, and that he saw a flock of about fifty on 15th March, 1883. He also reports one killed at Foxton in October, 1884. Mr. Ingram writes:—"In flocks, in the winter season, in the Vale of Belvoir." Mr. W. G. Adams shot three specimens—so he and others informed me—on 30th Dec., 1885, in a field just off Saffron Lane, Aylestone, and says there were sixty or more in the flock. Mr. W. Brookes, writing from Croft in April, 1888, says:—"Golden Plovers are common here in winter, in time of floods; I have shot them frequently in the meadows. There was a flock of about twenty flying over the floods when the snow melted a month since."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough writes:—"Has been observed by Mr. N. L. Calcraft at Edith Weston, and recorded by the late Rev. C. Lucas, formerly Rector of that place; also at Ashwell by Mr. H. Bromley"; and Mr. Horn, who informs me that he saw some near Uppingham on 14th Feb., 1886, says:—"A few are seen every year in the Welland Valley."

RINGED PLOVER. *Ægialitis hiaticula* (Linnæus).

"Oxbird," "Ring-Dotterel."

An accidental straggler from the coast, usually in spring and autumn.—Mr. Babington (Supplement 'Potter') stated that it had been killed at Groby by the keeper of the Earl of Stamford. Harley recorded its occurrence in the meadows at Belgrave, and elsewhere in the county, early in the spring of 1841. The Museum Donation-book records the presentation, on 24th March, 1869, of a "Ring-Dotterel shot in the Abbey Meadow." Mr. Bevans shewed me one which he shot there somewhere about the year 1875, and I saw one in the

\* The Grey Plover, a much rarer bird, but which might occur at any time with other Plovers, is distinguished in any stage of plumage, by the possession of a diminutive hind toe, which the Golden Plover lacks.





hands of Turner, said to have been shot, in 1881, also in the same locality, where, Turner informs me, it was frequently met with some years ago. I was fortunate enough to shoot a specimen (an immature female) for the Museum, at Thornton Reservoir, on 25th Sept., 1884.

In RUTLAND.—The only note I have is that furnished by C. Masters, who tells me that, in August, 1888, he shot a specimen on Burley Ponds.

**DOTTEREL.** *Eudromias morinellus* (Linnæus).

Formerly occurring in the county as a spring and autumn migrant.—Mr. Babington (Supplement 'Potter') stated that five were brought down at a shot by Mr. Tomlinson, jun., at Charnwood Heath, and that Miss Watkinson, of Woodhouse, had one, taken near Buddon Wood. Mr. Macaulay reports (see 'Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 65) that Sir George Beaumont possesses a specimen at Coleorton, and Potter, of Billesdon, reports two shot at Ilston, by Mr. J. Allen, of Frisby Lodge, but no dates are given, and the bird has not visited the counties for many years.

**LAPWING.** *Vanellus vulgaris* (Bechstein).

"Green Plover," "Peewit."

Resident, and generally distributed; in severe winters, however, it withdraws until the early spring, when it is often met with in large flocks.—On 4th Nov., 1885, Lapwings were reported to be flocking in meadows by the Aylestone-Road Gas-Works, and the next day—the floods being "out"—I saw several flocks of some six or seven hundred or more congregated in meadows opposite the Aylestone Mill.

Mr. Davenport writes:—"In April, 1884, I remarked a cock and two hen Lapwings frequenting a ploughed field for some little time; eventually I found the two nests on the same morning, within ten yards of each other, each nest containing four fresh eggs. I am sure there was only one male bird with the two hens."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Harley, writing of the Lapwing in this county, said:—"It is considered to migrate and totally withdraw itself during the rigorous season of winter." Mr. Horn remarks upon this:—"To be seen, generally in the meadows near the Welland, during *mild* and *open* winters, but should never expect to see them during frost and snow. About March they return in pairs to their breeding-grounds. In the neighbourhood of Uppingham, the most in any one field or meadow would be three pairs."

**TURNSTONE.** *Strepstilas interpres* (Linnæus).

An accidental visitant from the coast.—Turner received a male and female, shot at the Abbey Meadow about 1880 or 1881, and I saw a young one, said to have been shot in the Abbey Meadow in the spring of 1883. It appears an old one was shot at the same time and place.



OYSTER-CATCHER. *Hæmatopus ostralegus*, Linnæus.

“Olive,” “Sea-pie.”

A rare and accidental straggler from the coast, chiefly in spring and autumn.—Harley recorded the occurrence of one at Loughborough in the year 1840. On 26th Sept., 1887, Mr. J. E. Hodding was fortunate enough to shoot a fine, and nearly adult, specimen of this bird in a water-meadow next to the Gas-Works on the Aylestone Road, and generously presented it to the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Finch informed me that a male bird was killed by his keeper (Masters) at Burley Ponds, in January, 1878, and I have since seen this in the possession of Mr. Tryon. Mr. Horn reports that one in the possession of Mr. William Northen, of Thorpe-by-Water, was shot in the Welland Valley.

## FAMILY SCOLOPACIDÆ.

AVOCET. *Recurvirostra avocetta*, Linnæus.

“Cobbler’s Awl.”

Now a rare straggler to Britain, and the only authority we have, for its admission into the local list, is that of Mr. Wolley, of Beeston, who saw a specimen of this rare visitant while fishing near the confluence of the Soar with the Trent in June, 1856 (see ‘Zoologist,’ 1856, p. 5280). It passed over his head, “giving a distinct view of its upturned bill.”

GREY PHALAROPE. *Phalaropus fulicarius* (Linnæus).

Of irregular occurrence in autumn.—Harley stated that, during the autumn of 1841 and the following winter, many birds were captured throughout the county. The species occurred again in the autumn of 1846, and also in December, 1853, when a fine specimen was shot by Mr. Bloxam, at Twycross. Moreover, towards the close of 1854 it appeared at Foxton, where one was shot on the canal which passes through that village. Mr. Macaulay records (‘Mid. Nat.’ 1882, p. 10) that one, killed (by the late Rev. H. Matthews) at Foxton, in the winter of 1860-1, is now in the possession of the Rev. A. Matthews. I am not certain if this is the specimen recorded by Harley. The late Mr. Widdowson told me that he had received two or three specimens killed near Melton Mowbray. In 1887 I saw, in the possession of Mr. J. S. Bevins, of Ingarsby Old Hall, an example shot by his father at Wellsborough, fifteen or twenty years previously; and Mr. Richard Naylor, Thrussington, has kindly presented one to the Museum, which he tells me he found dead, in May, 1864, on some plough land near Cossington Fox-covert, on the Old Fosse Road.







WILSON'S PHALAROPE. *Steganopus wilsoni* (Sabine).

Mr. J. Whitaker, F.L.S., F.Z.S., of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, exhibited, at a meeting of the Zoological Society held 18th May, 1886, a specimen of this American bird, never before recorded for Britain, said to have been obtained at Sutton Ambian, near Market Bosworth, in Leicestershire.—The note was published in the 'Proceedings' of the Society, 1886, Part III., p. 297; also in the 'Zoologist,' 1886, p. 256, and in a local paper. Had Mr. Whitaker communicated with me, I might have saved him the trouble of putting up this ornithological skittle only to be knocked down promptly, for, as I saw it before he knew of its existence, I should not have failed to secure it for the Leicester Museum if I had had the *smallest* grain of faith in its being locally obtained. To relieve the historian of the future of any further anxiety I may say that, being behind the scenes in this matter, I can emphatically state that Wilson's Phalarope *was not obtained in the county, nor in Britain.*

WOODCOCK. *Scolopax rusticula* (Linnæus).

A winter migrant, sparingly distributed.—Mr. Davenport shot a very light-coloured example in Cold Overton Wood, in December, 1884, and I shot, at Aston Firs, on 29th Nov., 1887, a large, dark-coloured bird (a female, weighing 13 oz.) which is now in the Museum. A notion prevails amongst sportsmen that the light-coloured birds are males, and the dark-plumaged ones, on the contrary, females; but such I do not think is the case, no author having as yet differentiated the plumage, although it is well known that the female is the larger bird.

Harley remarked that it had bred in Martinshaw, and also in the woods at Donington Park, in the northern division of the county. A nest found by Chaplin in Martinshaw Wood contained four young ones which were reared off. Sir George Beaumont wrote to Mr. Macaulay that Woodcocks bred, some years ago, at Coleorton, and Mr. Macaulay stated ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 10) that "a nest was found in Owston Wood a few years ago." Mr. Davenport, who knows the district well, commenting upon this statement, says:—"So it is rumoured, but I doubt it."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough writes me that a nest containing four eggs was found in Barnsdale Wood about 1874, by G. Cunningham (one of his keepers), and further remarks that it is the only nest he has heard of in the county.

In the 'Zoologist,' 1869, p. 1645, is the following note:—"I have an old oil-painting of a woodcock as nearly *pure white* as possible: the artist has depicted two sides of the bird, and there is hardly a coloured feather upon it. The picture bears the following inscription:—"This very remarkable woodcock was shot by the Earl of Gainsbro', Nov. 7, 1748, and painted from the bird itself, by S. Goodwin, of Oakham." From the handsome frame assigned to the production, and the trouble taken to give a double representation, this appears to have been thought a very great wonder at that time of day.—Geo. Dawson Rowley;

5, Peel Terrace, Brighton, March 3, 1869." Writing to the present Earl of Gainsborough upon this, he replied, on 16th Jan., 1888:—"I have often heard of the Woodcock to which you refer, and believe it *was* shot at Exton. The picture I know, and it is at present in the possession of Col. Noel, Elston Hall, Newark." Writing to that gentleman, he replied, on 19th Jan., 1888:—"I inherited the picture from my late uncle, The Honourable William Noel of Ketton, M.P., and it originally came from Exton. Upon the picture, which is in *oil*, is written:—'From this real original hath been taken near Fifty Copies. This most Extraordinary Woodcock was Shot Nov. 7th, 1748—By one of the Earl of Gainsborough's Servants, and Painted from the Bird itself.' Size of Picture—19½ inch. × 16 inches."

GREAT SNIPE. *Gallinago major* (Gmelin).

"Double Snipe," "Solitary Snipe."

A rare autumn visitant.—According to Harley, Chaplin, of Groby, shot one in Martinshaw Wood during the winter of 1838. Mr. Davenport says his father shot one at Tilton in December, 1861, and—ate it! The late Mr. Widdowson's diary contains a note of one killed at Little Dalby on 28th Sept., 1868. Mr. Macaulay recorded ('Mid. Nat.', 1882, p. 10) that one was killed near Lutterworth some years ago by Mr. Sansome, of that town, and is now in his possession. Another was obtained at Noseley a few years since. A third\* was killed in 1879 near Smeeton, by Mr. Elliot, and was *eaten* by him; and a fourth was picked up dead in 1881 at Billesdon Coplow, and appeared to have died from want, as it was quite uninjured. On 2nd Sept., 1885, Mr. A. Ross, of Leicester, whilst shooting over the Garthorpe Estate, near Melton Mowbray, killed a Great Snipe, which his Dog pointed in a clover-field, and, as is usual with this species, at some considerable distance from water. The specimen, a fine dark-plumaged one, weighing nearly 8 oz. was presented by Mr. Ross to the Museum. This was recorded in 'The Field' for 12th Sept., 1885. I saw in the hands of Ludlam, a bird-stuffer, a Great Snipe which had been shot by Mr. J. C. A. Richards, in a field at Blaby, during the first week in September, 1885.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough writes me that it has been recorded by Mr. J. Montague as occurring at Belton in 1850. Masters informs me that he shot one, in September, 1877, in flooded fields close to Eggleton, and another at Oakham Pastures, in October, 1885. He also states that he saw one several times, in 1887, by the side of the canal near Ashwell.

COMMON SNIPE. *Gallinago caelestis* (J. S. T. Frenzel).

"Full Snipe."

Generally distributed, but not so common as formerly, and, although seen for the greater part of the year, it is doubtful if it now remains to breed.—

\* Mr. Macaulay did not see this specimen, but, as he was informed that it weighed ½ lb., he thinks it must have been of this species.





Mr. Davenport reports that, in December, 1876 or '77, a wisp of seventy to a hundred Snipes occupied, for a few days, a field at Billesdon which had become almost inundated during heavy rain. This is certainly the greatest assemblage I have heard of in the county. On 31st Aug., 1881, Mr. Davenport flushed one out of some wet rushes at Skeffington; and, although this is a very early date, it has been beaten by Mr. Macaulay, who saw two at Saddington Reservoir, 15th July, 1885, and shot one at the same place, 3rd Aug., 1886. Again, after the hard winter of 1887-8, he saw two on the Smeeton Brook, so late as 16th and 22nd April. I have seen it and known it to occur so close to Leicester as the Abbey Meadow, Aylestone Fields, Knighton, and, according to Mr. W. A. Evans, near Soar Lane Mill.

Harley observed:—"Occasionally it nestles and breeds in the swampy parts of the margins of Groby Pool, as I am informed by Mr. Chaplin. A few years since the bird nested in Bradgate Park, on a rough piece of ground intersected by rushes, situated between the old stables (now no more) and the residence of the park keeper." Adams appears also to have told him that it annually bred on the northernmost side of the Park. This is the only record I had until Mr. N. C. Curzon wrote me that "the nest of a 'Full Snipe,' with eggs, was found in a meadow near the River Soar, on August 5th, 1881, and seen for some time after until accidentally destroyed," which, if no mistake has been made, is an extraordinarily late date.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire, but I have no record of its breeding.

JACK SNIPE. *Limnocryptes gallinula* (Linnæus).

"Half Snipe," "Judecock."

An autumn visitant, sparingly distributed, and leaving us early in the spring, to breed in Northern Europe, etc.—I have seen some mounted specimens, which were shot by Mr. Samuel Bevans in the Abbey Meadow, sometime about the year 1877. A specimen was caught in the "allotment gardens," close to Lancaster Street, Leicester, on 20th Oct., 1884, and presented to the Museum. Mr. Davenport informs me that, in 1885, he "shot one out of some thistles at Lowesby, on 16th Sept.,—a very early date." Mr. Macaulay remarks the increasing rarity of the "Jacks," but, in the winter of 1885-6, it was unusually abundant, so close to Leicester as at Knighton and Rowley Fields, from whence I procured several examples. On 13th April, 1888, I saw a small Snipe get up quite silently from the old river at Aylestone, and believe it to have been a "Jack," and if so it would be a late date for this bird to be with us.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn shot several in November, 1887.



DUNLIN. *Tringa alpina*, Linnæus.

"Oxbird," "Plover's page," "Purre," "Sea-Snipe," "Stint."

An uncommon autumn and winter visitant from the coast, which has, I believe, never been met with in Leicestershire in its spring or breeding plumage.—Harley recorded it for Bosworth and Loughborough, and also noted several examples killed "in the immediate vicinity of the disused reservoir of the Forest." Mr. Sebastian Evans, writing to the late Rev. Churchill Babington, who kindly furnished me with the note, quoted from his brother, the late Rev. Arthur Evans' miscellaneous bird notes:—"Dunlin shot at Gopsall, January, 1847." Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 78) said:—"Occasionally seen on our reservoir in small parties. I noticed a flock of fourteen there during the past winter, 1881." I saw four specimens in the possession of Mr. S. Bevans, shot by him in the Abbey Meadow, about 1878-9; one in the possession of T. W. Tebbs, shot by him at Blaby, about the same time; and two in the flesh, in winter plumage, shot at Fleckney, by Mr. C. Allsop, 20th Oct., 1885. I purchased two for the Museum: one from Elkington, in 1885, said to have been killed in the Abbey Meadow some years before; the other from Harry Throsby, who shot it with a catapult, on the canal, near the Gas-works, Aylestone Road, 2nd Feb., 1888, and brought it to me in the flesh.

LITTLE STINT. *Tringa minuta* (Leisler).

Two of these rare little autumnal migrants—never before recorded for the county—were shot out of a party of three, on 22nd Sept., 1885, at Saddington Reservoir, by Mr. Macaulay, who generously presented them to the Museum. The larger of the two, an immature female containing small eggs, weighed 352 grs.; total length,  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches; bill,  $\frac{8}{10}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{17}{10}$ ; carpus to tip of wing,  $4\frac{1}{8}$ . The other, also apparently an immature female, but rather difficult to determine, weighed  $\frac{3}{4}$  oz. or 330 grs.; extreme length,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches; bill,  $\frac{8}{10}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{8}{10}$ ; carpus to tip of wing, 4. The occurrence of these was noted in the 'Field' of 10th Oct., 1885. Previous to this, however, it had occurred in the county, for the Rev. W. H. Marriott shot one at Saddington Reservoir, which was unfortunately recorded as being Temminck's Stint (see following species). Addressing Mr. Marriott, in January, 1888, for particulars, he wrote me:—"My belief is that it was shot some years earlier than the one (1860) you name, about 1854 or 1855, towards the latter part of the summer, but I have not kept the exact date." This specimen, which has been kindly presented to the Museum by Mr. Marriott, is very similar to the 1885 specimens. Pinchen tells me that he had two to mount, which, he believes were shot at the "Dead Hole," Belgrave, about September or October, 1887, but, as he does not know the name of the man who shot them, this statement must be taken for what it is worth.





TEMMINCK'S STINT. *Tringa temmincki* (Leisler).

Mr. Macaulay recorded ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 78):—"A specimen of this bird was shot at Saddington Reservoir, in 1860, by Rev. H. Marriott. The bird was seen and identified by Rev. A. Matthews." This statement, after being copied into many publications, unfortunately proves to be an error, for, suspecting the bird might be referrible to the previous species, I wrote to the Rev. Henry Marriott, now Rector of Thrussington, who, replying on 2nd January, 1888, most kindly sent me the identical specimen to examine. The first glance shewed me that it was a Little Stint in immature plumage; and, indeed, Mr. Marriott himself wrote:—"I have always been under the impression that the bird in question is only the Little Stint," and again:—"I am not, myself, in any way responsible for the error." This is, therefore, another instance of "a good bird gone wrong," and Temminck's Stint must be erased from the Leicestershire fauna.

To prevent similar mistakes I may, without giving all the points of difference, point out one unerring test by which the two closely-allied species may be distinguished *in any stage of plumage*: Temminck's Stint has the *outer tail-feathers pure white*. Little Stint has those feathers *ashy brown*.

CURLEW SANDPIPER. *Tringa subarquata* (A. J. Gùldenstädt).

"Curlew-billed Sandpiper," "Pigmy Curlew."

A spring and autumn visitant to Britain.—Its occurrence in the county rests upon the vague statement of Harley, who wrote:—"The appearance of this species of *Tringa* in the county, I am enabled to record on the testimony of a sportsman resident at Loughborough, who shot one on the banks of the Soar."

RUFF. *Machetes pugnax* (Linnæus).

"Reeve" (the female).

A spring and autumn migrant to Britain, not remaining to breed as formerly.—I am happy in being able to add this hitherto locally-unrecorded bird to the present list, the first specimen having fallen to the gun of Mr. A. K. Perkins, at Saddington Reservoir, on 19th Aug., 1887. It was kindly presented to the Museum by the fortunate sportsman, and proved, on dissection, to be a female; weight  $3\frac{3}{4}$  oz. nearly; total length, including bill and tail, 9·75 inches, bill (on culmen) 1·25, along gape 1·3, wing (carpus to end of longest primary) 6·2, leg (tarsus) 1·6, tail 2·7. Colour of bill bluish-horn colour, the lower mandible being lighter and reddish at base; eyes very dark brown; legs and toes dusky-greenish with ochreous-brown, clearer grey near thigh; claws dark brown.

SANDERLING. *Calidris arenaria* (Linnæus).

A rare straggler from the coast, where it is common in winter.—Some years since, according to Harley, who examined them, three or four birds of this species were shot near the Reservoir in Charnwood Forest.

In winter plumage very like the Dunlin, but may be at once differentiated from that bird, by its being destitute of the hind toe.

COMMON SANDPIPER. *Tringoides hypoleucus* (Linnæus).

“Summer Snipe.”

A summer visitant, sparingly distributed, remaining with us, in ordinary seasons, from the middle of April to the middle of September, and occasionally breeding.—Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter’) mentioned Gracedieu and Groby Pool as localities for it, and Mr. Bevans reports it as commonly occurring, years ago, in spring, in the Abbey Meadow. I have obtained specimens from Aylestone, Belgrave, Saddington and Thornton Reservoirs, and Wistow. One which I shot at Aylestone was merely wounded, and thereupon swam and dived with ease—a little known habit of this bird. Mr. W. A. Evans reported that, in August, 1885, he saw six Common Sandpipers fly up the new Flood-works cutting into the town of Leicester, but, of course, they turned back immediately. I saw three at the Flood Works, Aylestone, on 30th July, 1888.

Harley recorded that it bred on the banks of Groby Pool, as he learned from Mr. Chaplin, who found it there. Mr. Macaulay states that it breeds at Saddington Reservoir (see ‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1881, p. 256), but his only ground for this assertion is the fact of his having seen immature birds there during late summer. Mr. H. A. Payne, of Elm House, Enville, wrote me, in August, 1888:—“About three years ago I found a Sandpiper’s nest in the old walled garden adjoining the brook in Bradgate Park. The bird was what is called about there a Summer Snipe. Another nest was found the same year at Bradgate, the eggs of which I have,”—and Mr. Payne kindly presented to the Museum, in 1888, two eggs from one of the above-mentioned nests.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.

GREEN SANDPIPER. *Helodromas ochropus* (Linnæus).

A spring and autumn visitant, not common, but sometimes remaining during winter.—Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 69) recorded its occurrence at Groby Pool. A mounted specimen was presented to the Museum, 7th April, 1851, by Mr. Job Glover, “killed in Leicestershire,” presumably at Bagworth. It was noticed by Harley on the Wreake, and he wrote:—“It has also been shot on the banks of the Soar and Trent. Occurred, in several instances, during the autumn and winter of 1853.” I saw, in the possession of Mr. J. S. Bevins, of Ingarsby Old Hall, a specimen shot by his father at Wellsborough, sometime about 1865-70. The Rev. G. D. Armitage writes me that he shot one at Broughton Astley on 6th Sept., 1878. Mr. Macaulay shewed me a specimen in the possession of a person named Hensman, shot by Mr. John Peberdy at Smeeton Brook about the year 1882. He also informed me of two, both killed at one flying shot, by Mr. A. K. Perkins, at Saddington, August, 1883, and







now in the possession of Mr. Douglass of Market Harborough. A fine female was shot at Saddington Reservoir on 19th August, 1887, by Mr. A. K. Perkins, and presented to the Museum, being the first we have acquired, as an undoubted *local* specimen, since 1851.

In RUTLAND.—A spring and autumn visitant, sometimes remaining during the winter.—I saw two mounted specimens in the possession of the Earl of Gainsborough, which he informs me were shot at Ashwell Brook, in January, 1887, and I saw a beautiful example at the ponds by "Fort Henry," Exton Park, on 15th Sept., 1887. Since then, Lord Gainsborough observed it on the Welland at Tinwell, on 19th April, 1888 (see 'Zool.', 1888, p. 304). Mr. R. Tryon possesses a mounted specimen procured in the summer of 1887, which he informed me he saw sitting on the hurdles around the cricket-ground opposite to his house. Masters sent, for the Museum, a fine male, which he shot at Burley on 3rd Jan., 1889.

WOOD-SANDPIPER. *Totanus glareola* (Gmelin).

A rare straggler, on migration, to Britain.—Harley characterized this species as more rare and shy than its congener, *T. ochropus*, and stated that it was met with at Groby Pool in 1840, and also occurred during the winter of 1852-3.

SPOTTED REDSHANK. *Totanus fuscus* (Linnæus).

A rare straggler, on migration, to Britain.—Inserted in this list on the authority of Mr. J. Whitaker, of Mansfield, Notts., who wrote me:—"I have also a Spotted Redshank, shot by my brother, W. Whitaker, Esq., Sept., 1880, on Thornton Reservoir side," and again:—"The Redshank, Spotted, is not in the dark summer plumage, but I think in change."

GREENSHANK. *Totanus canescens* (Gmelin).

A rare spring and autumn visitant.—Harley wrote:—"Has been shot on the banks of Groby Pool, and also at Swithland. Mr. Yarrell, on the authority of a resident at Melton Mowbray,\* stated that it is not uncommon in the more eastern parts of the county." I saw a specimen in the hands of Elkington, said to have been shot at Enderby. Writing to Mr. Joseph Burchnall, of the Cottage Farm, Enderby, for confirmation, he replied:—"I shot the Greenshank some time in August, 1885, in Shenton Meadow, Parish of Enderby."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—C. Masters told me that he shot one in March, 1879 or 1880, at Burley Ponds, and that the late Mr. Widdowson had it and named it.

\* Probably the late Mr. Widdowson, who was often in communication with Yarrell: but I do not know what gave rise to this statement, as I have no definite record of the occurrence of this species in the county, with the exception of the Enderby specimen, and even Harley confesses, at the close of his note, that he is quite unable to give any further details than the bald statement above.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT. *Limosa lapponica* (Linnæus).

Finding this bird recorded by Mr. Babington as having been shot near Swarkestone (Supplement 'Potter'), I, thinking that place was in the county, included the note in my list, published in the 'Zoologist,' 1886, p. 331. As Swarkestone is, however, in Derbyshire, it is the latter county which must lay claim to the record.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT. *Limosa ugocephala* (Linnæus).

A rare spring and autumn visitant.—On the authority of Mr. (the Rev. Arthur?) Evans, of Market Bosworth, Harley recorded a specimen shot in the vicinity of Market Bosworth, and a second at Osbaston. He said further that it was erroneously described by Mr. Evans, in one of our oldest local papers, as the "Red-breasted Snipe," or "Brown Snipe" of Jenyns and Yarrell, and I record the fact lest this note of the "Red-breasted Snipe" should crop up at some future time, and cause it to be added to the Leicestershire fauna. There is a specimen in the Museum, in summer plumage, marked "Leicestershire, 1869," but I am by no means sure that it is a local example, owing to a pleasing peculiarity prevailing, before my advent at the Museum, of labelling *any* bird from *any* locality "Leicestershire," providing the species had been recorded, even in the most passing manner, as having occurred in the county. I have had the good fortune, however, to see an undoubted Leicestershire specimen, in nearly adult summer dress, which was shot by Mr. Thos. Beck, of Newtown Linford, at the Reservoir, Bradgate Park, in August, 1887, and which he has since kindly presented to the Museum.

WHIMBREL. *Numenius phaeopus* (Linnæus).

A straggler from the coast, of accidental occurrence in the Midlands.—"One shot near Charnwood Heath" (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 69). Harley wrote:—"The Whimbrel occurs occasionally in sparing numbers, as, for instance, in the meadows about Loughborough, at Bosworth, and elsewhere in the county. Killed near Leicester, April 23rd, 1856."

CURLEW. *Numenius arquata* (Linnæus).

An accidental straggler from the coast.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 69), said:—"Shot at Ben's Cliff; now at Rothley Temple." Harley wrote:—"Before the Forest of Charnwood was enclosed, this wader was very plentifully diffused over its uneven surface." The Museum Donation-book records the gift, on 2nd Oct., 1865, by Mr. H. B. Chamberlain, of a Curlew shot at Desford. On 16th Aug., 1887, Mr. Macaulay saw one at Saddington Reservoir, which was unfortunately missed at short range by his young son. A fine young male, however, was shot out of a ditch near to a small spinney at Arnesby, on 1st Nov., 1887, by Mr. A. Langton, and presented to the Museum, being the only authentic local specimen we possess, the 1865 one having disappeared.





IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn reports that about a dozen were seen by Mr. Shelton, on 30th Jan., 1886, at Beaumont Chase Farm, and that Mr. Thomas Northen saw one flying over Thorpe-by-Water, on 13th Feb., 1886.

## ORDER GAVIÆ.

### FAMILY LARIDÆ.

#### SUB-FAMILY STERNINÆ.

ARCTIC TERN. *Sterna macrura* (Naumann).

“Sea-Swallow” (applied to all Terns).

Of accidental occurrence on spring and autumnal migration.—Harley recorded that, in the spring of 1842, during the prevalence of north-west gales, this species was unusually abundant in the county, especially from the 7th to the 10th of May, when they might be seen “in small groups, varying in number from a single bird, up to ten, fifteen, and even twenty individuals,” on the streams and pools of the county, and he saw “numbers of individuals coursing along the tortuous windings and sinuosities of the rivers Soar and Trent.” I procured a beautiful adult male, in perfect plumage, at Saddington Reservoir, on 25th May, 1886, and saw, at Kibworth, a stuffed specimen which had been shot at Thornton some years previously.

IN RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Harley related that it occurred as in Leicestershire (and as, indeed, in other counties) during the north-west gales which prevailed in May, 1842. I saw one in the possession of Mr. R. Tryon, shot, about 1883, whilst passing over the fields near Oakham.

COMMON TERN. *Sterna fluviatilis* (Naumann).

Of accidental occurrence on spring and autumn migration.—Harley wrote:—“I recollect seeing several birds of this species, a few years since, hovering over the river Soar close to the town of Leicester, immediately below the Castle, busily engaged in taking small fish. It has been shot in most parts of the county, but especially in the vicinity of the Soar and Trent.” A specimen is recorded in the Museum Donation-book, as having been shot at Leicester, on 13th Nov., 1858; another (a female) at Saddington Reservoir, on 15th Oct., 1881, by Mr. Macaulay; a third at Aylestone, on 29th Oct., 1881, by Mr. E. Batten, and a fourth—a female, and, like the last, in immature plumage—at Saddington Reservoir, on 16th Oct., 1886, by Mr. A. K. Perkins. The three last examples are now in the Museum. Mr. Ingram informs me that it visits the Belvoir Lake occasionally, generally after strong easterly gales.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I have seen a fine, large, adult specimen in the possession of Thos. Allies, keeper to the Earl of Gainsborough, shot at Burley Ponds in 1886.

ROSEATE TERN. *Sterna dougalli* (Montagu).

A summer visitant to Britain.—I insert this rare species on the authority of Harley, who wrote:—"The author has an opportunity afforded him of recording its visit to his native county, the bird having been shot by Chaplin on Groby Pool in the year 1836. The example was examined by us, and was correctly described shortly after its capture. The pectoral feathers down to the vent were of a roseate hue, denoting its distinctive race. Moreover there were some other peculiarities equally as obvious, belonging to the example, which we were careful to examine, and the which could not be mistaken by us—we refer to its bright orange feet. The bird was shot about the period of the summer solstice. It was preserved, but was suffered to go to decay in consequence of the ignorance of the artist who prepared the skin, making use of improper ingredients for that purpose. When we saw it in the summer of 1840, four years after its capture, the bird, to our utter amazement, was nearly destroyed by the ravages of *acar*i, and shortly afterwards, that is within the space of a few months, it became a mere mass of unsightly feathers and ragged bones, no longer fit for the cabinet.—Very rare and most unusual." I cannot but think some mistake has been made, Harley probably not being aware that most of the white-breasted Terns have, when in breeding plumage and alive, or a short time after death, the breast suffused with a roseate tinge. The "bright orange" feet depend upon how far the orange-red was translated by Harley in the direction of scarlet, the feet of *Sterna dougalli* being described by Dresser as "reddish orange." Still, there is no reason why the species should not have occurred in common with other rarities, and Harley, in this case, may, perhaps, have the benefit of the doubt.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN. *Hydrochelidon leucoptera* (Schinz).

A rare straggler to Britain, in spring, summer, and sometimes in autumn.—Harley related that, on the 24th May, 1852, while driving in company with a friend close to Groby Pool, he observed a pied-coloured Tern skimming over the surface of the water, in pursuit of *Tipulidæ* and small Dragon-flies. He was of opinion that the specimen referred to was either *S. leucoptera* or *S. fuliginosa*, and not *S. nigra*, especially as *S. fuliginosa* had occurred on the Trent, in May, 1852, coincident in point of time with his pied Tern. Mr. Macaulay told me that Stafford, the water-keeper at Saddington Reservoir, described to him a white and black bird—evidently a Tern—which he saw there on 13th June, 1883, and Mr. Macaulay thinks this must have been *H. leucoptera*, because one shot three days before, on one of the Norfolk Broads, was









in company with another. I would remark, however, that both observers may have been correct in seeing a *white and black* Tern, and yet that it need not follow that it was the White-winged Black Tern in either case, the immature Black Tern being pied, as is also the adult in winter.

BLACK TERN. *Hydrochelidon nigra* (Linnæus).

An occasional straggler from the coast, chiefly in spring and autumn.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 70) wrote:—"Sometimes found at Groby Pool, Cole Orton, and elsewhere." Harley remarked:—"The Black Tern frequently occurs in the vicinity of our rivers and pools during the summer months." Mr. Macaulay recorded ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 80) that "One was shot at Saddington Reservoir in December, 1865, by Rev. A. Matthews, and is now in his collection." A Black Tern was shot by Mr. W. A. Heap, of Melton Mowbray, who obligingly wrote me:—"I shot it on August 4th, 1884, as it was flying about a ballast-hole filled with water, about two acres in extent, close to Melton. It kept darting at the water as you see Swallows do, and every time it brought out a small fish (Stickleback or Minnow)." Mr. Edward Bidwell, of East Twickenham, informed me that he bought a specimen in Leicester, which was said to have been killed in the Abbey Meadow many years ago. This specimen he has since most generously presented to the Museum, and I purchased, also for the Museum, two adult mounted specimens which were shot near Belgrave, 24th April, 1886, out of a flock of over forty. Mr. Macaulay wrote me:—"Two adult Black Terns on Saddington Reservoir, on 2nd June, 1887. Seen and identified by Rev. A. Matthews, who watched them for over an hour and tried to shoot them, but, though they came within thirty yards of him, he did not fire, as he had no boat, and could not have got them." A most interesting example, an adult in change to winter dress—having a white forehead, face, and throat, a partially black head, and a grey breast thinly barred with white—was shot by Mr. R. Henfield on a flooded meadow at Nailstone, in September, 1888, and kindly presented by him to the Museum. A young bird in the plumage of immaturity—i.e. with forehead, face, throat and remaining underparts pure white; head and hind-neck black; and with wing-coverts and some of the secondaries broadly marked with light-brown—was shot in the Abbey Meadow during the first week of October, 1888, and passed into the possession of Mr. F. F. How, of Evington Street, who obligingly allowed the Museum to acquire it.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I have seen a pair (adult) in the possession of Mr. G. H. Finch, M.P., who informed me that they were killed at Burley Ponds in April, 1886. Mr. R. Tryon reports another, also shot there about the same time. A fourth, Masters informed me, he shot, also at Burley Ponds, in August, 1888.

SUB-FAMILY *LARINÆ*.KITTIWAKE. *Rissa tridactyla*\* (Linnæus).

Of accidental occurrence in spring and autumn.—Mr. Babington (Supplement ‘Potter’) recorded its occurrence at Bardon, and Harley wrote:—“Occurred on the Soar, 1854, also on Groby Pool and elsewhere in the county.” A mounted specimen presented to the Museum by Mr. H. J. Bellairs on 7th June, 1852, is noted in the Donation-book as having been found dead at Evington; another is noted, under date 9th March, 1861, as having been “shot at Upton”; a third (purchased for the Museum) was found dead in the Abbey Meadow on 7th February, 1881, and a fourth (also purchased for the Museum) was obtained at Melton Mowbray in 1881. Mr. Macaulay mentions one shot at Gumley on 3rd January, 1880, and another—an adult female in winter dress,—which is now in the Leicester Museum, shot by Mr. Thomas Aulay Macaulay on Saddington Reservoir, 15th September, 1881. Mr. Davenport says two immature specimens were shot at Ashlands in September, 1881, and that he shot another, fully mature, flying over the house at Ashlands, some time in 1886. I saw an adult specimen, in the hands of Pinchen, which was shot at Braunstone on 14th April, 1888, by a man named Kitchen.

In RUTLAND.—Has doubtless occurred, but I have no exact record, it not having been discriminated from the Common Gull.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. *Larus fuscus*, Linnæus.

A rare straggler from the coast.—The late Rev. Arthur Evans recorded, in his notes, the occurrence of a specimen on Groby Pool in 1850. In the autumn of 1880 I saw an adult specimen, said to be from Bradgate, in the hands of a man named Donnell. The Leicester Museum purchased an immature specimen shot at Somerby in 1880, and another, also immature, shot at Melton in 1881.

COMMON GULL. *Larus canus*, Linnæus.

Of accidental occurrence, especially after stormy weather on the east coast.—Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 70) said:—“Often seen and shot; flocks of Gulls, probably *L. rissa* as well as this, frequently fly over Thringstone after violent storms. None, except the Common Gull, have fallen into my hands.”

I am sorry I cannot endorse this statement, none but Kittiwakes having come into *my* hands. Harley and Mr. Macaulay only generalize, neither of them giving any definite data, nor differentiating it from the far commoner Kittiwake, and Harley makes “confusion worse confounded” by calling it the *Grey* Gull, a term often applied to the Herring-Gull, and, by nearly all shore shooters who are not ornithologists, to the immature stages of several of the larger Gulls. At

\* Hind toe absent (“tridactyla”), which distinguishes it from other Gulls.





present we are absolutely without a definite record of the occurrence of this bird in the county.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—I saw one in the possession of Mr. G. H. Finch, which he tells me was shot at Burley Ponds by Masters, about 1882. Mr. Horn informs me that a young bird of the year was brought to him for identification by Henry Kirby of Uppingham, who shot it on 20th September, 1887, at Liddington. I saw a specimen in the possession of Pinchen, procured at Oakham about November, 1887.

GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL. *Larus marinus*, Linnæus.

“Cob.”

No record for the county, unless, indeed, we can take, without the proverbial “grain of salt,” the following statement (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 70):—“A very large Gull, which I have not seen, was killed at Benscliff. This would most likely be *L. marinus*, the Great Black-backed Gull.” I cannot understand how any person could name a large Gull without seeing it, considering that there are several kinds of *large* Gulls, each one of which would have several stages of plumage.

In RUTLAND.—A rare straggler from the coast.—Lord Gainsborough reports one (immature) which he saw in the possession of Mr. W. Wortley, shot at Ridlington about 1860. Mr. Finch has one in immature plumage, which, he writes me, was shot on Burley Ponds by Masters, about 1882.

BLACK-HEADED GULL. *Larus ridibundus*, Linnæus.

“Peewit-Gull,” “Red-legged Gull.”

An accidental straggler in spring and autumn.—Mr. Bloxam, in his MS. notes, says:—“Peewit Gull is not uncommon about Ashby Wolds; I had a young one shot this summer there.” An immature bird in the possession of Mr. T. Stevenson, of Kibworth, was shot some years ago at Thornton Reservoir. The Leicester Museum possesses a pair in immature plumage, said to have been shot at Belgrave on 3rd November, 1881. Mr. Macaulay shot an immature specimen at Saddington Reservoir, on 9th August, 1887; and a female in winter plumage was shot at the same place, on 15th October, 1887, by Mr. A. K. Perkins, who presented it to the Museum.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Finch’s keeper, C. Masters, reports that he killed one at Burley Ponds in December, 1884.

LITTLE GULL. *Larus minutus* (Pallas).

A very rare straggler from the coast.—Elkington stated that about the year 1868, a specimen was shot between Old Belgrave Locks and “Lady

Bridge," and was sold by him to "Old Mansfield," a Birmingham eye-maker since deceased. He particularly noticed "its chubby little head," and I should think it probable he was not mistaken in the species.

#### SUB-FAMILY *STERCORARIINÆ*.

COMMON SKUA. *Stercorarius catarrhæctes* (Linnæus).

An autumn and spring visitant to Britain, but of rare and accidental occurrence inland.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 70) said:—"One shot near Wymeswold, December, 1841. Communicated by Mr. Potter," and Harley wrote:—"This species of *Lestris* has been captured in the county, but the visit of the creature must ever be considered unusual and irregular. The bird appeared in the month of October, 1846, during the prevalence of a heavy gale from the N.W." The occurrence in the county of Leicester of the "Common" Skua, probably one of the rarest of the Skuas, must stand or fall upon Mr. Babington's note, as, in October, 1846, Harley evidently could not discriminate between this bird and the Pomatorhine Skua, from the fact that, in November, 1846, he admitted that he had mis-named the one recorded by him (see following species) which he had wrongly pronounced to be the *Common* Skua.

POMATORHINE SKUA. *Stercorarius pomatorhinus* (Temminck).

"*Pomarine* Skua" (by error).

A spring and autumn visitant to Britain, of irregular occurrence, but, inland, a rare straggler from the coast.—Harley related that one was shot near Leicester, in November, 1846, and, being merely wounded, was kept some time in a state of captivity.\* Another, an immature bird, killed near Hinckley in the autumn of 1879, and secured for the collection of Mr. R. W. Chase, of Birmingham, has since been presented by that gentleman to the Leicester Museum, for which I also purchased an immature specimen (mounted), almost identical in plumage with that last mentioned, said to have been shot at Somerby in November, 1881.

RICHARDSON'S SKUA. *Stercorarius crepidatus* (Gmelin).

A rare straggler from the coast.—In the autumn of 1880 I saw, in the possession of a man named Donnell, a nearly adult specimen, said to have been shot at Enderby.

\* Mentioned also in the late Rev. Arthur Evans' 'Miscellaneous Bird Notes,' in the possession of Mr. Sebastian Evans.







## ORDER TUBINARES.

## FAMILY PROCELLARIIDÆ.

STORM-PETREL. *Procellaria pelagica*, Linnæus.

“Mother Carey’s Chicken.”\*

A rare and accidental straggler from the coast.—Harley noted one shot on 23rd Oct., 1846, close to the town of Leicester, on the River Soar, a few yards below the West Bridge. Mr. Macaulay states (‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1882, p. 80) that in 1862 another was found dead at Gumley, and is in the possession of Rev. A. Matthews. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote:—“Several have been picked up dead near Melton,” Mr. G. H. Storer informs me that he has seen a nice specimen (mounted), which was picked up dead in a field near Ansty, after very stormy weather, in 1875; and Mr. G. H. Nevinson has one that was caught in Dover Street, Leicester, about the year 1882, having flown against a wall.

LEACH'S PETREL. *Procellaria leucorrhoa* (Vieillot).

A very rare straggler from the coast.—This bird is recorded in Mr. Babington’s list (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 70) under the name of “*Thalassidroma Bullockii*. Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel,” as thus:—“One found in Gopsal Park is in the possession of the Earl Howe. Communicated by Dr. Kennedy.” Harley stated that one, collected by the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society, was obtained in the county, but the precise locality is unknown.

MANX SHEARWATER. *Puffinus anglorum* (Temminck).

A rare straggler; sometimes driven inland by gales on the coast.—According to Harley, who called this bird the “Cinereous Shearwater,” one was captured by a Shepherd Dog, in a turnip-field near the River Soar at Cossington, in 1840. For several days it was confined to a grass plot by the foot, and during its captivity it was observed to grow less sociable, especially on the appearance of a Dog or Cat, or, indeed, any domestic creature, for, no sooner did one venture near, than it rushed at it with fury, and, with its sharp bill, drove it away. Mr. Macaulay states (‘Mid. Nat.,’ 1882, p. 80) that one, picked up nearly dead at Gumley, in November, 1867, is in the collection of Rev. A. Matthews; and another was found dead at Billesdon in 1879. With reference to this last I am informed that the date is 1877, and that two others which I reported in the ‘Zoologist,’ 1886 (p. 412), as being taken at Billesdon, are referrible to this single specimen, which was, it appears, caught in a hedge by a Retriever belonging to the late Mr. T.

\* A popular name for all Petrels.

Tomblin of the Coplow Farm. Turner told me, in October, 1885, of one caught in a pigstye, some seven or eight years previously. The late Mr. Widdowson informed Mr. Macaulay that one was caught alive at Nether Broughton, by Mr. Greaves, on 2nd Sept., 1879. Mr. Macaulay informed me of a specimen now in his possession—which I have seen since it was set up—found in the Newarke, in the middle of Leicester, on the 30th Aug., 1888, by a Mr. Harrison. It had evidently been killed by striking against something in its flight. Sex, unfortunately, not ascertained.

## ORDER PYGOPODES.

### FAMILY COLYMBIDÆ.

#### GREAT NORTHERN DIVER. *Colymbus glacialis*, Linnæus.

The only authority I have for including this species in the present list is a statement by the late Mr. Widdowson, that it “has been killed here in immature plumage”; but as both of the following species, especially *C. septentrionalis*, so often do duty for this much rarer bird, I am inclined to think that, in this case as in many others, the species have become confused one with another.

#### BLACK-THROATED DIVER. *Colymbus arcticus*, Linnæus.

A rare straggler from the coast, and seldom found inland in mature plumage.—Mr. Babington (Supplement ‘Potter’) said:—“Donington Park. Communicated by Rev. Thomas Gisborne.” Upon this Harley remarked that “a second is reported to have been killed at Mountsorrel”;\* that another—a male in mature plumage—was procured in a meadow below Leicester Castle on 4th January, 1854, but, although shot, was alive when seen by Harley, who found it to be 4 lbs. 7 oz. in weight; and another—“a female in the plumage of the Lesser Imber of Bewick—was shot in the Abbey Meadow on the same day,” the two last examples, he considered, being probably driven inland by the gale which prevailed on 4th January, and the severity of the north-east wind, which brought a hurricane of snow. The Museum Donation-book contains an entry, under date 4th January, 1854, to the effect that an immature male was shot at a mill near the Abbey Meadow; and that another, also immature (sex not stated), was shot at Aylestone on 10th January, 1854, and presented by Mr. N. C. Stone. Mr. Macaulay stated (‘Mid. Nat.’ 1882, p. 72) that “one was shot on Saddington Reservoir in February, 1874.”

\* Harley’s informant appears to have been the late Rev. A. Evans, in whose ‘Miscellaneous Bird Notes’ the date 1850 is given.





IN RUTLAND.—I am enabled to add this rare species to the list of birds for this county, from a specimen which I have examined in the possession of the Right Hon. Gerard Noel, and which, if not immature, is, probably, an adult in autumnal plumage, and was shot on one of the ponds at Exton about 1850.

RED-THROATED DIVER. *Colymbus septentrionalis*, Linnæus.

A straggler inland, chiefly in winter, and nearly always in immature plumage.—According to Mr. Babington (Supplement 'Potter'), one in immature plumage was killed at Groby, by the keeper of the Earl of Stamford. In October, 1885, at Carlton Curlieu Hall, I saw an immature specimen contained in a case, on the back of which was written:—"From Saddington Reservoir, Dec. 16th, 1840, shot by Mr. Hayes Marriott." Harley wrote:—"Captured during the storm which prevailed on the 4th January, 1854, in several parts of the county; but in no instance, I believe, in its perfect state of plumage.\* It has been frequently met with on the Soar, about Loughborough, and also on the Trent. It has likewise been shot on the Wreake; and on such pools as those of Groby, Saddington, and Dishley." T. Freer, of Aylestone, shewed me a fully adult specimen (red-throated), which he stated he shot in 1869 (Sept. 10th) in the canal between the "West" and "Mill Lane" Bridges, Leicester, which specimen I have since acquired for the Museum. Mr. G. H. Storer informs me that two (probably a pair) in winter plumage, shot on Cropstone Reservoir, are preserved at the Reservoir Hotel, but he did not know the date, and I cannot obtain any further information.

Mr. Davenport wrote me that, on the 2nd March, 1889, "as the wife of a man named Wm. King, living at Burton Overy, went out at the back door to feed her Ducks and Chickens, she found, squatting amongst them, a strange bird, which she succeeded in capturing by throwing her apron over it. It was kept for a few days, fed fairly well on such food as could be procured for it, did not appear to be at all shy, and, although helpless on the ground, when put into a tub of water its motions were very graceful, and it swam and dived with freedom." Before it died, however, Mr. Davenport rode over to see it, and kindly notified me of the occurrence, thus putting me into communication with the possessor, and enabling me to acquire for the Museum a fine male specimen of the Red-Throated Diver in winter plumage. Being in rather poor condition, its weight was but 2 lbs. 10 oz., total length 27 inches, but probably this excessive length was due to the fact that it had been hung up for some two days by the bill.

IN RUTLAND.—This species, like the preceding, I am enabled to add

\* Probably Harley did not know that in winter, its plumage is similar to that of the immature bird, the red throat persisting only in rare cases.



through Lord Gainsborough, who took me to see an immature specimen in the possession of Henry Cunnington, which was shot by his (Cunnington's) father, at Exton, about 1858.

## FAMILY PODICIPIDÆ.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE. *Podiceps cristatus* (Linnæus).

"Tufted Grebe," often called "Eared Grebe" by error.

A spring visitant, sometimes remaining until winter.—Mr. Babington (Appendix 'Potter,' p. 70) said:—"Groby Pool. Communicated by the Rev. A. Bloxam." Harley had no record of its breeding in the county, but said it had been met with on the River Soar, about Loughborough, near Donington, and elsewhere. Mr. Macaulay records it for Saddington Reservoir, its earliest appearance as noted by him being 17th February (1885); the latest, 12th November (1881). In 1880 several birds were procured at the Reservoir, and on 12th November, 1881, Mr. Macaulay shot a young female, which he presented to the Museum. A specimen was shot on Braunstone Pool, sometime about 1882, by W. H. Johnson of Braunstone Old Hall. Mr. J. B. Ellis informs me that two or three pairs frequented Thornton Reservoir during the summer of 1883. In 1886 this Grebe made its appearance earlier than usual, and in extraordinary numbers, upon the various sheets of water in the counties, as, for instance, on Saddington and Thornton Reservoirs, and at Belvoir, from whence a pair were sent to the Museum on 7th May. The male weighed 2 lbs. 6 oz., and the stomachs of both contained nothing but a quantity of Grebe's breast and side feathers, probably their own, some few seeds, sand, and a greenish oily substance, no doubt derived from fishes they had swallowed. Mr. G. H. Storer informs me that he saw a fine pair on Cropstone Reservoir on 2nd August, 1887; also a pair on 21st May, 1888, together with a small flock of Tufted Ducks; and a pair on Groby Pool, on 28th June, 1888.

Mr. Macaulay was the first to record its breeding in the county, at Saddington Reservoir, whence he received, in 1874, a male and female, and one young in the down. On 7th May, 1883, he shewed me a pair nesting at Saddington Reservoir, which brought off their young. In the spring of 1884 a pair nested there and brought off four young, which remained until late in the summer, but finally left owing to the dry weather causing the water to become low, and leaving them no hiding-places. In 1885 the same or another pair nested again and laid five eggs, but, three of them being taken on 23rd May, the birds deserted the nest and left the water entirely. In 1886 several pairs nested at Saddington, where, on 25th May, we found two nests containing one egg each, and, going again on 1st June, I was enabled, by Mr. Macaulay's permission, to get one of the nests—which then contained four eggs,—together





with the male bird, for the Leicester Museum. At the same time and place I also procured one other egg, and Mr. Macaulay found a nest and took one egg on 5th June, 1888. Mr. H. A. Payne informs me that he has taken several nests on the Bradgate Reservoir, the last being in 1879.

In RUTLAND.—Seen by Lord Gainsborough on the ponds at Exton in 1885, and again on 24th March, 1888 (see 'Zoologist,' 1888, p. 304). J. Evans reported its occurrence some years ago at Casterton Magna, and C. Masters tells me that it occurs now and then at Burley Ponds. I have no record, however, of its breeding in the county.

RED-NECKED GREBE. *Podiceps griseigena* (Boddaert).

According to Mr. Macaulay ('Mid. Nat.,' 1882, p. 79), "One was shot on Saddington Reservoir in 1874," and it appeared from his MS. notes that it was shot by Mr. F. Kemp, in the month of March. Thinking there was probably some mistake, and that the bird might have been the Little Grebe in spring plumage, I wrote to Mr. Kemp to ask if he was certain about the bird, and was confirmed in my supposition, by the fact that he was unable to answer my query, merely saying that he thought the date was 1876. After some trouble—Mr. Kemp having removed to Great Yarmouth—he fortunately visited the Museum, in January, 1888. On looking around at the specimens, he could not see one like his own, and said it certainly was *not* the Red-necked Grebe, but seemed to think it might be the Slavonian, and so the matter rests, leaving it a certainty that we cannot claim the *Red-necked* Grebe for our list.

SCLAVONIAN GREBE. *Podiceps auritus* (Linnæus).

A rare winter visitant.—Harley recorded that it visited us "in the severe winter months of 1844-5, when a fine example was shot by Chaplin on the waters of Groby Pool. The species has also been met with by gunners and sportsmen on the waters of the Soar, Trent, and Wreke." The late Mr. Widdowson reported the occurrence of one, in immature plumage, at Melton.

EARED GREBE. *Podiceps nigricollis* (C. L. Brehm).

A rare visitant, usually in spring, and probably Harley was mistaken when he wrote of this species:—"Formerly more abundant, and pretty well distributed over the county. Occurs on the Soar and Trent;" he, most likely, having been told of the "Eared Grebe," which, in gamekeeper's language, means the Great Crested Grebe. Later, however, he recorded:—"1844. December. This species of Grebe has occurred this winter on Groby Pool, since Chaplin has carried me an example for private examination."

LITTLE GREBE. *Tachybaptus fluviatilis* (Tunstall).

“Dabchick,” “Didopper.”

Resident, but sparingly distributed.—Mr. Babington (Appendix ‘Potter,’ p. 70) said :—“Rothley, Groby, etc.; but not abundant.” Harley, however, appears to have considered it common in his day, on the Soar, Trent, Wreake, and other streams, as well as on most large waters, as Saddington, Groby, and Bosworth Pools, and remarked, under date 14th July, 1842, that “Young Grebes have a shrill call-note, which they almost incessantly keep up when they first come abroad on the surface of the water.” I saw one on Bosworth Pool, on 6th December, 1884, and shot one—a male—at Belgrave, by the sewage weir, on 10th February, 1886. Mr. G. H. Storer informs me that he saw a pair on the Fish-pond at Ulverscroft Priory, on 28th June, 1888.

Mr. Ingram writes word that it “breeds in Frog Hollow Pond, near Belvoir,” and Mr. W. A. Evans presented to the Museum a nest and three eggs, taken by him at Thornton Reservoir on 9th June, 1881, at which time he states that he found as many as five nests in one day, and that they were all placed on the roots or on the branches of small willows near the shore. He also remarks that this species covers its eggs with wet, green, weed, when leaving the nest, as recorded of the Great Crested Grebe. With regard to this habit of both Grebes, I would remark that, although various authors assert that this is done to assist the maturing of the eggs, as a kind of hot-bed, yet I would suggest that, taking into consideration the fact that the eggs of both birds when first laid are of a dazzling white, it is much more probable that instinct has taught the birds to cover up such conspicuous objects from the prying eyes of Carrion-Crows and other birds which, as is well known, harry the nests. Very soon, by this covering-up process, the eggs become of the same ground colour as those of the Moorhen and Coot, a colour not so likely to attract the keen eyes of marauders.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough has observed it at Exton Park, and Mr. Horn informs me that, some years ago, it nested regularly at Burgess Pond, Ridlington.

## FAMILY ALCIDÆ.

RAZORBILL. *Alca torda*, Linnæus.

Of very unusual occurrence inland.—I saw an adult specimen, in 1888, in the collection of Mr. H. C. Woodcock, who assures me that it was shot on the Wreake, at Rearsby, many years ago, by his keeper.

COMMON GUILLEMOT. *Lomvia troile* (Linnæus).

“Willock.”

A very rare and accidental straggler from the coast.—Mr. Macaulay stated (‘Mid. Nat.’ 1882, p. 79) that he had a specimen “shot many years since on the







River Soar, at Cossington, by the miller who then resided there." This specimen I have seen. Elkington shewed me one in the skin, *said* to have been killed at Husbands Bosworth, 1883.

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Mr. Horn reports that a specimen was shot in the Welland Valley in 1873, and is now in the possession of Mr. W. Northen, Thorpe-by-Water.

LITTLE AUK. *Mergulus alle* (Linnæus).

"Rotche."

A rare straggler from the coast, driven inland by severe weather.—According to Mr. Babington (Supplement 'Potter'), "A pair of these rare Arctic birds were taken alive at Nanpantan, Nov. 6th, 1837, in a turnip field, by J. Cartwright, Esq., of Loughborough, who endeavoured, without success, to keep them alive on fish and insects." Writing of the Little Auk, Harley stated that it appeared in Leicestershire during the autumn of 1838, a pair, in a semi-exhausted state, being picked up amongst the hills of Charnwood Forest; and further that, in the autumn of 1840, this species again occurred in the county and adjoining districts. The late Mr. Widdowson wrote me from Melton:—"Several have been picked up at different times near here."

In RUTLAND.—As in Leicestershire.—Lord Gainsborough records one picked up at Casterton about 1840; another at Exton in 1853, picked up by a man named Newbold in his pigstye in Exton village. It passed into the possession of the Hon. Henry Noel, who was only enabled to keep it alive for three days. This specimen was mounted, but is not now in existence. One was reported by Lord Kesteven as occurring at Pickworth in 1884, so Lord Gainsborough informs me, and the Rev. R. Hurt, Rector of Carby, writes:—"Two were picked up after a storm, in 1885, in Essendine parish."

## ADDENDA.

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### RUTLAND.

I insert the following additional notes on the authority of the Earl of Gainsborough, who received them from A. C. Elliott, a taxidermist, of Duddington, Northamptonshire:—

BEWICK'S SWAN. *Cygnus bewicki* (Yarrell).

(To follow Whooper Swan, p. 129.)

A fine specimen, which weighed 17 lbs., was killed on the river Welland, at Tixover, by J. O. C. Knapp, in April, 1870, and is now preserved at Chentrey, Buckinghamshire.

LONG-TAILED DUCK. *Harelda glacialis* (Linnæus).

(To follow Harlequin Duck, p. 135).

"Welland River." No other details given.

LITTLE CRAKE (p. 144).

"On the Gwash and the Welland." No other details given, and — ?

DUNLIN (p. 154).

"Tixover."

LITTLE STINT (p. 154).

"Tixover," killed by A. C. Elliott (N.D.).

COMMON SKUA (p. 164).

"Great Skua."

If no mistake has been made in the species, this appears to have been picked up, exhausted but alive, on Barrowden Heath, by James Brown, about 1866.

STORM PETREL (p. 165).

A specimen was picked up at Empingham, in 1879, and was afterwards sold at Peterborough, in 1885.

LEACH'S PETREL (p. 165).

One picked up dead and dirty at Empingham, in 1876.

MANX SHEARWATER (pp. 165-6).

"Empingham. Picked up" (N.D.).

RAZORBILL (p. 170).

One killed at Seaton, in 1879, by Mr. Royce. "On flood."

COMMON GUILLEMOT (pp. 170-1).

One killed at Seaton, in 1879, by Mr. Royce.





# DATES OF ARRIVAL OF SUMMER MIGRANTS IN LEICESTERSHIRE.\*

FROM 1843-55 AND 1877-88.

<i>Order</i> —PASSERES. <i>Family</i> —TURDIDÆ.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	
WHEATEAR ... ..	April 18	March 28	...	March 23	April 7	April 14	April 26	April 3	April 3	April 19	April 1	...	May 6	...	April 4	March 25	April 15	May 3	April 4	March 19	April 13	March 25	April 22	April 21			
WHINCHAT ... ..	" 18	April 22	...	May 6	" 25	" 29	" 26	" 23	May 8	May 1	" 12	...	...	...	...	April 28	...	April 28	May 15	...	" 23	April 25	May 1	...			
REDSTART ... ..	" 19	" 22	May 4	April 12	...	...	" 13	" 28	April 20	April 26	...	April 23	...	...	May 15	" 23	" 18	" 21	April 10	April 30	May 2	" 22	April 23	...			
NIGHTINGALE ... ..	...	...	...	...	May 2	May 4	" 20	" 28	" 21	...	" 15	...	April 24	April 18	April 25	" 23	" 14	" 18	" 26	" 22	April 25	" 26	" 29	" 27			
WHITETHROAT ... ..	" 19	" 22	April 26	" 15	April 19	" 4	" 23	" 20	" 28	May 1	" 18	" 24	May 3	" 29	" 29	" 22	May 6	" 24	" 11	" 30	" 23	" 26	" 28	" 23			
LESSER WHITETHROAT ... ..	...	...	May 15	" 25	...	" 6	" 26	...	...	" 1	...	...	...	" 16	" 11	" 24	April 16	" 7	May 2	" 24	" 29	" 24	" 28	" 25			
BLACKCAP ... ..	" 19	" 22	" 6	" 15	" 19	April 11	" 26	May 8	...	April 29	" 18	...	March 24†	...	...	...	...	...	" 6	" 26	" 23	March 31	March 31				
GARDEN-WARBLER ... ..	...	" 22	" 6	" 18	" 19	" 11	" 29	...	...	...	" 18	...	April 29	...	May 1	" 25	May 2	May 7	May 1	May 4	May 8	May 7	May 6	...			
CHIFFCHAFF ... ..	March 31	" 9	March 29	March 27	March 31	" 3	" 5	April 10	" 3	" 9	" 5	" 6	March 28	March 21	March 29	March 19	March 24	March 18	April 1	March 19	March 31	March 24	April 2	" 21			
WILLOW-WARBLER ... ..	April 19	" 13	April 23	April 12	April 11	" 25	" 5	" 11	" 9	" 26	" 8	...	April 11	April 14	April 21	April 6	April 9	" 26	" 1	April 1	April 18	April 23	" 12	April 19			
WOOD-WARBLER ... ..	...	" 22	...	May 5	May 9	May 2	...	...	...	" 30	...	...	...	...	May 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
RED-WARBLER ... ..	" 20	" 26	" 29	April 17	" 4	...	" 26	" 18	" 21	" 30	...	May 8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
SEDGE-WARBLER ... ..	" 19	" 26	" 29	" 17	" 1	April 29	May 3	" 18	" 21	May 1	" 17	" 9	May 1	" 18	May 8	" 23	April 27	April 24	" 17	May 1	" 27	May 2	April 27	April 30			
GRASSHOPPER WARBLER ... ..	...	" 22	...	" 12	" 2	" 11	April 26	" 18	" 20	...	" 20	...	" 1	May 4	" 6	" 23	" 27	" 24	" 17	" 4	" 27	" 10	" 29	" 30			
<i>Family</i> —MOTACILLIDÆ.																											
RAY'S WAGTAIL ... ..	" 7	" 18	" 25	" 16	April 20	" 16	" 18	" 15	" 13	April 9	" 13	April 23	April 26	April 19	...	" 19	" 28	" 19	" 20	April 23	" 29	April 8	" 17	" 19			
TREE-PIPI ... ..	" 19	" 22	May 6	" 16	" 19	" 16	" 19	" 23	May 9	" 18	" 18	May 5	...	...	April 30	" 22	...	May 10	" 21	May 1	...	...	May 1	...			
RED-BACKED SHRIKE ... ..	...	...	...	...	May 12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	May 9	...	...	...		
<i>Family</i> —MUSCICAPIDÆ.																											
SPOTTED FLYCATCHER ... ..	...	...	...	May 20	...	May 5	...	May 24	" 17	...	...	June 3	June 6	June 6	June 13	June 8	...	" 28	May 25	" 27	May 10	April 27	April 28	...			
PIED FLYCATCHER ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 5	...	...	...	...	" 27			
<i>Family</i> —HIRUNDINIDÆ.																											
SWALLOW ... ..	" 9	" 17	April 22	April 11	April 11	April 10	" 11	April 14	April 13	" 9	" 13	April 15	April 13	April 12	April 17	April 18	" 14	April 16	April 13	April 9	April 6	" 4	" 11	" 15			
MARTIN ... ..	" 18	" 18	" 24	" 12	" 19	" 30	" 23	" 21	" 13	" 18	" 17	" 15	" 21	" 23	" 26	" 30	" 14	" 16	" 4	" 28	" 20	" 5	" 27	" 19			
SAND-MARTIN ... ..	" 18	" 21	" 29	" 21	" 19	May 1	" 30	" 28	" 16	" 18	" 11	...	" 10	" 16	" 25	" 17	" 14	" 16	" 4	March 31	" 18	" 19	" 18	" 16			
<i>Order</i> —PICARIDÆ. <i>Family</i> —CYTSELIDÆ.																											
SWIFT ... ..	May 3	May 12	May 18	May 5	May 12	May 14	May 6	May 9	May 9	May 14	May 4	May 22	May 8	May 5	May 14	May 15	May 12	May 10	May 12	May 11	May 3	May 7	May 4	May 10			

\* Originally appeared (up to and including 1886) in the 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' October, 1886.

† Mr. Macaulay, 'Mid. Nat.', 1881, p. 251.

<i>Order</i> —PICARIDÆ. <i>Family</i> —CAPRIMULGIDÆ. NIGHTJAR ... ..	1813.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.
<i>Family</i> —PICUIDÆ. WRYNECK ... ..	April 9	April 22	...	March 30	...	...	May 23	April 23	...	...	...	April 24	April 24	April 21	April 7	April 13	April 17	April 21	April 13	April 13	...	...	April 17	...		
<i>Family</i> —UPUPIDÆ. HOOPOE ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	May 11	...	...	...	...	...		
<i>Family</i> —CUCULIDÆ. CUCKOO ... ..	.. 18	„ 22	April 25	April 24	April 23	April 25	April 29	„ 18	April 26	April 18	„ 21	...	„ 7	May 2	„ 30	„ 25	„ 23	„ 14	April 13	„ 7	April 15	April 24	„ 19	April 17		
<i>Order</i> —COLUMBÆ. <i>Family</i> —COLUMBIDÆ. TURTLE DOVE ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	May 18	...	...	May 9	May 6	...	...		
<i>Order</i> —FULICARÆ. <i>Family</i> —RALLIDÆ. CORN-CRAKE ... ..	.. 30	...	May 6	May 5	„ 30	„ 24	May 6	„ 20	„ 22	May 19	...	May 22	June 3	June 15	June 8	„ 29	May 14	„ 5	May 3	...	„ 8	April 29	May 21	...		
<i>Order</i> —LIMICOLÆ. <i>Family</i> —SCOLOPACIDÆ. COMMON SANDPIPER ... ..	„ 19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	„ 20	April 26	...	...	...	...	...	April 21	...	May 3	April 23	May 2	April 26	April 28		
<i>Order</i> —PYGOPODES. <i>Family</i> —PODICIPIDÆ. GREAT CRESTED GREBE ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	April 10	...	March 25		

NOTE.—The dates between 1813-55 are compiled from Harley's MSS., 1847 not appearing, as in that year Harley was in Yorkshire; those from 1877-88 are compiled from notes furnished by Messrs. Macaulay, Matthews, Davenport, and others, and some few by myself.

REMARKS.— Usually, the first to appear is the Wheatear—easily distinguishable by the white patch over its tail. It may be looked for on fallow-lands—hence its name of “Fallow-Chat,”—any

time after the middle of March. Just after, usually in the following week, appears the Chiffchaff, whose shrill and persistent strain of “Chiff, chaff, chivy, chevy,” repeated many times, usually indicates its presence in retired thickets, or sheltered shrubberies and orchards. After this each day brings some fresh arrival, the latest being the Corn-Crake, Swift, and Nightjar, the latter generally last, and well into the middle or end of May.

There are many of the rarer summer migrants to the British shores, not as yet recorded for

Leicestershire. Should any, therefore, be observed at any time, not noted in the foregoing list, it is requested that their occurrence may be kindly notified to me.

In addition to the actual summer migrants, there are many of accidental occurrence—more frequently in spring than at any other time—such as the Honey-Buzzard, and many of the Sand-pipers, Terns, &c. The resident birds also receive great accessions to their ranks, chiefly in the autumn, at which time many rare winter visitants may be looked for.



THE REPTILES  
OF  
LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND.

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CLASS REPTILIA.

ORDER ORNITHOSAURIA.

SUB-ORDER *PTEROSAURIA*.

FAMILY RHAMPHORHYNCHIDÆ.

PTERODACTYLE. *Rhamphocephalus*, Seeley (sp. ind.).

In RUTLAND.—In that part of the ‘Memoirs of the Geological Survey’ which pertains to the Geology of Rutland, at p. 291, in the Palæontological Tables prepared by Mr. R. Etheridge, F.R.S., I find this extinct Flying Lizard (species not determined) credited as *Pterodactylus* to the Great Oolite of Belmesthorpe, but Mr. R. Lydekker, B.A., F.G.S., F.Z.S., kindly informs me that “this form would doubtless belong to *Rhamphocephalus*.”

ORDER CROCODILIA.

SUB-ORDER *EUSUCHIA*.

FAMILY TELEOSAURIDÆ.

SUB-FAMILY *TELEOSAURINÆ*.

*Steneosaurus*, E. Geoffroy (sp. ind.).

In RUTLAND.—Mr. Lydekker, in his ‘Catalogue of the Fossil Reptilia and Amphibia,’ pt. i., p. 118, states that the British Museum possesses “Fourteen associated ventral scutes of the anterior and middle part of the posterior buckler, not improbably belonging to this genus; from the Great Oolite of Belmesthorpe.”



*Teleosaurus*, Geoffroy St. Hilaire (sp. ind.).

In RUTLAND.—I find this extinct Crocodile (species not determined) also credited \* to the Great Oolite, Belmesthorpe.

## ORDER DINOSAURIA.

### SUB-ORDER *THEROPODA*.

#### FAMILY CŒLURIDÆ.

*Tanystrophæus*, Owen.

Mr. James Plant, F.G.S., wrote, at p. 40 ‘Report of the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.’, under date 6th April, 1874:—“I have in my possession a single bone, which I took some years ago from these upper triassic beds; † it is one of the caudal vertebræ or tail bones of a reptile (probably *Tanystrophæus*, Owen), new to the British Islands, although abundant in Central Europe. No bone like it, as far as my information extends, has yet been taken in any other locality. Its description awaits further discoveries of a like kind, for where there is one, there must have been more, and they only want searching for.” But, as Mr. Plant appeared unwilling to allow me to have it examined, in order that it might be recorded in this book, I was compelled to trouble Professor H. G. Seeley, F.R.S., etc., etc., who kindly wrote me that it was, he believed, half a caudal vertebra, and “certainly had no near affinity with *Tanystrophæus*,” which must, therefore, be expunged from the lists, leaving the “bone” still undetermined.

## ORDER SQUAMATA.

### SUB-ORDER *OPHIDIA*.

#### SECTION COLUBRIFORMES.

#### FAMILY COLUBRIDÆ.

COMMON SNAKE. *Tropidonotus natrix* (Linnæus).

“Grass-Snake,” “Ringed Snake.”

Resident and commonly distributed, especially throughout Charnwood Forest; and the Museum possesses several from there, and from other parts of the county.

\* Etheridge, p. 291, ‘The Geology of Rutland,’ etc.

† Upper Keuper Sandstone, near Leicester.





## SECTION VIPERIFORMES.

## FAMILY VIPERIDÆ.

VIPER. *Vipera berus*, Linnæus.

“Adder,” “Hether” (‘Leicestershire Proverbs’), probably a corruption from Adder.

Resident and generally distributed, especially about Charnwood Forest, but not so common, fortunately, as its harmless relative.—Harley remarked, under date 1846 :—“*Pelias berus* and *Coluber natrix* came forth abroad very early this season,” viz., during the first and second week of March. On the 13th and 14th of that month he noted both reptiles in Bradgate Park. There are specimens in the Museum from many localities in the county, but chiefly from the “Forest,” all of the dark variety.

## SUB-ORDER LACERTILIA.

## FAMILY LACERTIDÆ.

COMMON LIZARD. *Zootoca vivipara* (Jacquin).

“Scaly Lizard,” “Viviparous Lizard.”

Harley considered this species almost confined to the district known as Charnwood Forest, and wrote, under date 1845 :—“December 10th. ‘Para’ Bates informs me that he has occasionally seen, in his entomological rambles in Charnwood Forest and the neighbourhood around it, a species of Lizard which appears to affect the leaves of brambles and other plants. He describes the creature’s habits very vividly as being like unto those of a Chameleon, especially so when observed basking in the beams of the sun, and intent on feeding.” It is well known, however, that this is a common habit with *Zootoca vivipara*, and probably with most Lizards.

SAND-LIZARD. *Lacerta agilis*, Linnæus.

Rare, and I have no record of it save that furnished by Harley, who, describing it under Daudin’s specific name of “*Stirpium*,” appears to have met with it, for he wrote :—“If the vernal months be open and warm, accompanied with soft, breezy skies, the species comes abroad towards the latter end of March, and beginning of the month following. During the spring of the year 1842, the author in his walks met with it, April 22nd. In the following year it was recognised by us on April 19th, two days earlier.” He further remarked that it is liable to much variation in colour, he having met with it of a pale greenish-yellow, with the back of an umber-brown colour; others of a darker hue, and others again variegated with black spots down the centre of the back.

Although I have not met with it, I cannot think Harley could have confused it with the preceding common species, for he expressly stated (speaking of "*Lacerta*" *vivipara*):—"The species appears in the spring much about the same time as the Sand Lizard, but its reproduction is very diverse from it, since it is ovoviviparous, while *Lacerta stirpium* is oviparous only," which shews that he recognised the characteristics of the two species, and was not misled by considerations of colour or habitat.

## FAMILY SCINCIDÆ.

BLIND-WORM. *Anguis fragilis*, Linnæus.

"Slow-Worm."

Resident and commonly distributed.—There are specimens in the Museum from Charnwood Forest, Bardon Hill, and other places.

## ORDER ICHTHYOPTERYGIA.

### FAMILY ICHTHYOSAURIDÆ.

ICHTHYOSAURUS. *Ichthyosaurus communis* (Conybeare).

Professor Owen noted in the 'Rep. Brit. Assoc.' for 1839, p. 110, an entire skull from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, which is still preserved in the Museum of the Philosophical Institution at Birmingham. The British Museum possesses a cast from this (14593).<sup>\*</sup> He also figured, in the 'Trans. Geol. Soc.,' ser. 2, vol. vi., pt. i. pl. xx., and in his 'Liassic Reptilia' (Mon. Pal. Soc.), pt. iii., pl. xxviii., fig. 3, a slab, shewing the impressions of the bones and of the integument, together with some of the bones themselves, of an imperfect pelvic paddle, probably belonging to the present species, from Barrow-on-Soar. The distal portion is entire. It is also figured by Mantell in his 'Petrifactions and their Teachings,' p. 374, fig. 76, and by Kiprijanoff in the 'Mém. Ac. Imp. St. Pétersbourg,' vol. xxviii., art. 8, pl. ix., fig. 12 (1881). The original was presented by Sir Philip de Malpas Grey Egerton, Bart., in 1855, to the British Museum, where it still remains, and is numbered 29672.<sup>\*</sup>

I am greatly indebted to Mr. Valentine Ball, M.A., F.R.S., F.G.S., Director of the Science and Art Museum, Dublin, for kindly forwarding me the original list of the late Mr. Wm. Lee's fossils, which, it is stated thereon, were "Examined and named, etc., by Professor Etheridge, Nov. 21st, 1867," by which it appears that the Dublin Museum possesses thirteen specimens of *I. communis*, ranging in length from 3 ft. 2 in. to 7 ft. 9 in., and also four crania referrible to this species—all from Barrow-on-Soar. The Derby Museum also possesses one from the same place, so I am informed by Mr. H. Arnold-Bemrose, F.G.S.

<sup>\*</sup> Lydekker, 'Catalogue of Fossil Reptilia and Amphibia,' part ii.







The Leicester Museum possesses three specimens of this reptile—one about 6 feet 6 inches in length, nearly perfect, shewing part of the eye with sclerotic plates—purchased from the late Mr. Lee; the jaw with teeth of another, presented by Mr. T. F. Bell some years since, all from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar, and a jaw, shewing very perfect teeth, from the Vale of Belvoir. The species is also mentioned, at p. 349 ‘Catalogue of British Fossils,’ by John Morris, F.G.S. (1854), from the “Lias of Barrow-on-Soar,” and by Mr. W. J. Harrison, F.G.S. (‘Geology of Leicestershire and Rutland,’ p. 37), as having been found in the Limestone “Good-for-nought,” in a section of a large pit between Barrow and Sileby, in 1874.

*Ichthyosaurus conybeari* (Lydekker).

First described by Mr. Lydekker in the ‘Geol. Mag.,’ dec. 3, vol. v., p. 311 (1888), who further says:—“It is not improbable that the skeleton in the Woodwardian Museum, Cambridge, from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, recorded as No. 11 on page 138 of Seeley’s ‘Index to Aves, etc., in Cambridge Museum’ (1869), belongs to the present form.”\*

*Ichthyosaurus intermedius* (Conybeare).

The Dublin Museum contains three specimens—the largest being 8 feet 3 inches in length—from Barrow-on-Soar; purchased from the late Mr. Wm. Lee. The species is mentioned also by Morris (‘Catal. Brit. Foss.’), and by Mr. Harrison (p. 37, ‘Geol. L. and R.’), as having been found in the same pit and position as *I. communis*.

The Leicester Museum possesses a specimen of this reptile, nearly perfect, 10 feet in length, from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar, which, if correctly determined, is the largest yet known, Mr. Lydekker recording this species as not exceeding seven feet. A limestone nodule from the same place, presented by the Messrs. Ellis, I caused to be split, and found it to contain the greater part of the head and jaws and the fore paddles of an *Ichthyosaurus*, which Mr. Lydekker, who has kindly referred the reptilian remains for me, pronounces to be of this species.

I wish here to record my grateful thanks to the Messrs. Ellis for affording me unusual facilities for systematically working the Barrow quarries; and it was on the occasion of one of my periodical visits, viz., on 5th July, 1889, that, through the instrumentality of Mr. John Raven, the courteous manager, whom I have to thank for many kindnesses, I became possessed of a nodule containing part of the thorax and paddle of *I. intermedius*, which, on being split, was found to exhibit some unusual markings. During the cleansing, Mr. W. P. Pycraft, my assistant, called my attention to an appearance on the anterior margin, which

\* Lydekker, ‘Catalogue of Fossil Reptilia and Amphibia,’ part ii.

struck him as likely to be the integument, but my further examination revealed the more important fact, that the posterior margin of the paddle was furnished with muscular striæ or fin-rays of some length (if the latter, probably cartilaginous) running from the phalanges. Recognizing the importance of this unknown feature in the anatomy of the *Ichthyosauridae*, I lost no time in submitting the specimen to Mr. Lydekker, who replied:—"The *Ichthyosaurus* paddle is indeed a prize. The contour of the fin is the same, so far as I can recollect, with that of a Continental specimen recently figured by Fraas." And again:—"On reading Fraas' paper through, I find he describes similar striæ in one of his specimens, and the same also occur in Owen's example. Both writers consider that they are due to bundles of muscular fibres, and although I am still impressed with their remarkable resemblance to fin-rays, we must have decisive evidence before we can say they are such, and not muscular fibres. Prof. Flower was much interested in your specimen."

This example will be fully figured and described in a forthcoming number of the 'Geological Magazine.' One half is exhibited in the Leicester Museum, and the counterpart has been presented by the authorities to the British Museum.

*Ichthyosaurus* (?) *integer* (Bronn).

The British Museum possesses (33178) "Slab exhibiting the dorsal aspect of a medium-sized left pectoral limb, agreeing in general characters with the one noticed under the head of *I. integer*; from the Lower Lias, probably of Barrow-on-Soar." \*

*Ichthyosaurus* (?) *zelandicus* (Seeley).

The British Museum possesses a large left coracoid (47420), probably belonging to this or to *I. acutirostris* (Owen); from the Upper Lias of the Vale of Belvoir.\*

SLENDER-JAWED ICHTHYOSAURUS. *Ichthyosaurus tenuirostris* (Conybeare).

The Museum contains a fine specimen, 9 feet in length, from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar; and no doubt this is the identical specimen referred to by David Thomas Ansted, M.A., F.R.S., F.G.S., etc., in 'The Physical Geography and Geology of the County of Leicester,' p. 56, who, after mentioning *I. communis* and *intermedius* possessed by the Museum, says, writing of *tenuirostris*:—"One of them, 9 feet in length, is the finest skeleton known; the head is particularly remarkable; the sclerotic plates of the eye form a circle 18 inches in diameter." This latter statement is, however, clearly an error, and for *diameter* we should read *circumference*, which would be about the measurement around the outer edge of the very perfect sclerotic plates of the Museum specimen. The Dublin Museum possesses two specimens, the largest 9 feet 2 inches in

\* Lydekker, 'Catalogue of Fossil Reptilia and Amphibia,' part ii.





length, and one cranium, from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, purchased from the late Mr. Wm. Lee. The species is recorded also by Morris ('Catal. Brit. Foss.') from that locality, and Mr. Harrison reports it ('Geol. L. and R.,' p. 37) as having occurred in the Limestone "Bottom Floor," in the same pit as *I. communis*, etc. (see p. 177).

BROAD-FRONTED ICHTHYOSAURUS. *Ichthyosaurus latifrons*, König.

The British Museum possesses the following :—(R. 1122.) The type specimen, which appears to have been obtained from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, and consists of the imperfect cranium, and a mass of matrix containing a large portion of the vertebral column. It was first figured by König in his 'Icones Foss. Sectiles,' pl. xix., fig. 250, and the dorsal aspect of the skull was subsequently figured by Owen in his 'Liassic Reptilia' (Mon. Pal. Soc.), pt. iii., pl. xxvii., fig. 1.\*

(38709.) A slab shewing the left lateral aspect of an imperfect skeleton from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar. It is interesting to note that impressions of the surface of the skin are shewn in the matrix. Figured and described by Owen, 'Liassic Reptilia,' pt. iii., p. 119.\*

(36182.) "Slab exhibiting the right lateral aspect of a nearly entire skeleton; from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar. The type of *I. longirostris* (Owen). Figured by Owen in his 'Liassic Reptilia' (Mon. Pal. Soc.), pt. iii., pl. xxxii., fig. 7."\*

And lastly (R. 1152) "The imperfect posterior portion of a crushed cranium; probably from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar."\*

BROAD-TOOTHED ICHTHYOSAURUS. *Ichthyosaurus platyodon* (Conybeare).

Although neither the British nor the Leicester Museum possesses any examples of this from Barrow-on-Soar, yet it is mentioned by Ansted (*op. cit.*) as occurring in the Lower Lias at that place, and it was probably, therefore, amongst the twenty-two skeletons which he states were in the public museum at Leicester, and in Mr. Lee's museum, Barrow-on-Soar, and may have formed part of the latter collection, but I cannot as yet trace it.

*Ichthyosaurus* (Conybeare *ex* König MS.) (sp. ind.).

Potter, in his 'History and Antiquities of Charnwood Forest,' writes, at p. 64 :—

"The Rev. Robert Gutch, of Segrave, favoured me with the following communication respecting a very valuable *Ichthyosaurus* discovered at Barrow :—'I had the pleasure, some years ago, through the kindness of Mr. Bradshaw, of presenting Dr. Buckland, among other fossil remains collected from our own as well as the Barrow lias, with a specimen of a small *Ichthyosaurus*, about five feet

\* Lydekker, 'Catalogue of Fossil Reptilia and Amphibia,' part ii.

long, wanting the greater part of both extremities. I cannot describe it to you better than in the words in which the Professor was pleased to acknowledge the receipt of it. "I have now to thank you for your magnificent present to our Museum of an extremely fine Ichthyosaurus, more perfect in its display of the bones of the sternum than any specimen I have ever seen; and which I hope to disengage from much of the stone in which it is now embedded."—He did so, and afterwards delivered some public lectures upon it, having, in his microscopic examinations of it, made, for the first time, the important discovery of the skin of this remarkable fossil. Of this he has given an accurate description in p. 22, vol. ii., of his Bridgewater Treatise, with drawings of the same in plate 10 of the same volume." Professor A. H. Green, M.A., F.G.S., kindly informs me that this specimen is in the Oxford Museum, but as yet undetermined.

The Leicester Museum possesses remains, including two femora, two humeri, and several vertebræ from the Lias, Barrow-on-Soar, and several large vertebræ found by Mr. Harrison in the Rhætic bone-bed, Spinney Hills, where were also found several teeth and coprolites, many of the latter containing fish-scales (see 'Geol. L. and R.,' p. 35), and Mr. E. Wilson, F.G.S., Curator, Bristol Museum, records ('Mid. Nat.,' vol. viii., p. 158) a vertebra, found in the Middle Lias Marlstone at Tilton-on-the-Hill, and kindly presented by him to the Museum.

The British Museum possesses (R. 1200) "Slab exhibiting the left lateral aspect of the hinder part of the caudal region; probably from Barrow-on-Soar." \*

The Dublin Museum possesses six portions of skulls and other parts from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, purchased from the late Mr. Wm. Lee.

## ORDER SAUROPTERYGIA.

### FAMILY PLESIOSAURIDÆ.

*Thaumatosaurus megacephalus* (Stutchbury).

I find, in Lee's MS. list of fossils from Barrow-on-Soar, a specimen 13 feet in length mentioned, under the name of *Plesiosaurus megacephalus*, as having been purchased from him by the Dublin Museum; but I have no means of knowing whether this has been correctly determined, or, as is probable, should be attributed to *Plesiosaurus macrocephalus*, Mr. Ball informing me that their reptiles have not yet been properly referred.

*Cimoliosaurus* (?) *truncatus* (Lydekker *ex* Owen).

IN RUTLAND.—The British Museum possesses (44904) the greater portion of a mandible, which is not improbably of this species; from the Great Oolite of Essendine.\*

\* Lydekker, 'Catalogue of Fossil Reptilia and Amphibia,' part ii









*Plesiosaurus* (?) *dewalquii* (Van Beneden).

The British Museum possesses (R. 1440) "Three imperfect cervical vertebræ, cemented together by matrix; from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar." Presented by Mrs. R. Etheridge, 1888.\*

*Plesiosaurus* (?) *hawkinsi* (Owen).

The British Museum possesses (R. 45) "A split slab of rock, shewing part of the skeleton of a small Plesiosaur, not improbably belonging to this species; from the Lower Lias of Bennington. Referred to in Nichols's 'History of Leicestershire,' vol. i., p. ccv." Presented by Major Harlowe Turner, 1880.\*

BROAD-HEADED PLESIOSAURUS. *Plesiosaurus macrocephalus* (Owen *ex* Conybeare).

The Leicester Museum possesses, besides a few scattered bones, one magnificent example, seventeen feet in length, and rather more than seven feet in width from the extremities of the paddles, from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar, purchased from the late Mr. Wm. Lee, of Barrow, in 1851 or 1852, by the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc., for the sum of one hundred pounds, and by them presented to the Museum. Prof. Ansted, who described it † under the name of *Plesiosaurus megacephalus* (in which error he has been followed by Mr. H. E. Quilter, in the "Lower Lias of Leicestershire," p. 61 'Geological Magazine,' decade iii., vol. iii.), pronounced it to be "worthy, not only of national, but of world-wide celebrity" (see 'Report of the Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' 1852, p. 14). Mentioned by Mr. Harrison ('Geol. L. and R.,' p. 37), who states that this species also occurred in the Limestone "Bottom Floor" of a section of a pit between Barrow and Sileby, taken 1874.

*Plesiosaurus*, Conybeare (sp. ind.).

I find a head and vertebræ mentioned in Lee's MS. list of fossils from Barrow-on-Soar, as having been purchased from him by the Dublin Museum. The Derby Museum contains part of a jaw from Barrow.

The Leicester Museum contains a rib, eighteen inches in length, found by Mr. Harrison in the Rhætic bone-bed, Spinney Hills (see 'Geol. L. and R.,' p. 35). This is included in the list of fossils from 'The Rhætics of Leicestershire,' by Mr. H. E. Quilter (see p. 17 'Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' April, 1889). We also possess a humerus from the Lower Lias, Barrow-on-Soar. Quite lately (in 1889) the Messrs. Ellis presented the Museum with some vertebræ and parts of other bones which may be doubtfully ascribed to *P. conybearei*.

\* Lydekker, 'Catalogue of Fossil Reptilia and Amphibia,' part ii.

† 'Physical Geography and Geology of the County of Leicester,' p. 56.

## CLASS AMPHIBIA.

## ORDER ECAUDATA.

## FAMILY RANIDÆ.

COMMON FROG. *Rana temporaria*, Linnæus.

Resident and common.

## FAMILY BUFONIDÆ.

COMMON TOAD. *Bufo vulgaris*, Laurenti.

Resident and generally distributed.

NATTERJACK. *Bufo calamita*, Laurenti.

I insert this merely to say that I introduced some of these pretty little Toads—procured from Southport by Mr. G. H. Storer—about the Museum grounds, lest, in the event of any surviving, they should be rediscovered and claimed as local.

## ORDER CAUDATA.

## FAMILY SALAMANDRIDÆ.

## SUB-FAMILY SALAMANDRINÆ.

GREAT WARTY NEWT. *Molge cristata* (Laurenti).

“Warty Eft,” “Effet.”

Resident, and generally distributed.

SMOOTH NEWT. *Molge vulgaris* (Linnæus).

“Common Newt,” “Effet,” “Asker,” “Smooth-skinned Eft.”

Resident, and generally distributed.

## ORDER LABYRINTHODONTIA.\*

Amongst the many fragments of reptilian bones discovered by Mr. Harrison in the Rhætic bone-beds of the Spinney Hills was one, hitherto unREFERRED, which I submitted to Mr. Lydekker, and which that gentleman pronounces to be “probably a piece of Labyrinthodont jaw.” Professor F. W. Rudler, F.G.S., kindly informs me that the Museum of Practical Geology, Jermyn Street, London, possesses Labyrinthodont remains from the Rhætics of Wigston.

\* In the ‘Memoirs of the Geological Survey’ (Geology of the Leicestershire Coal-Field, etc.) by Ed. Hull, B.A., F.G.S., 1860, it is recorded that Mr. Huish of Castle Donington had found footprints of *Labyrinthodon* (sp. inc.) in the Keuper sandstone at Weston Cliff, which is just over the Trent on the Nottinghamshire side.





# THE FISHES

OF

## LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND.

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### CLASS PISCES.

#### SUB-CLASS *DIPNOI*.

#### FAMILY SIRENIDÆ.

##### *Ceratodus latissimus*, Agassiz.

The Museum possesses two fossils which were collected by Mr. Harrison from the Rhætic Beds, Spinney Hills, and regarded as teeth of this species, but are now considered as very doubtful by Mr. A. Smith Woodward, F.G.S., F.Z.S., British Museum, to whom I am greatly indebted for assistance in referring the fossil fishes. Two specimens, however,—one of them very fine—obtained by Mr. Quilter from the same place and now acquired by the Museum, are thus described by Mr. Woodward in his notes ‘On some Remains of Fossil Fishes from the Rhætic Beds of the Spinney Hills, Leicestershire’ (see ‘Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.’, April, 1889, p. 21):—“A fine tooth of *Ceratodus*, and a fragment, are indistinguishable from some of the common forms from Aust Cliff, referable to *C. latissimus*. The nearly complete tooth measures between six and seven centims. in its longer diameter, and is completely detached both from its supporting bone and from the matrix. The coronal surface is irregular and comparatively flat; there are distinct indications only of three outer “horns,” or denticles, though there may have been a fourth small one; and the relative breadth of the tooth suggests that it pertains to the upper jaw.” This is interesting, as two species of the same genus have existed in Australia up to the present time, and according to Günther these survivors of the Triassic and Jurassic formations were not discovered until about the year 1870.

SUB-CLASS *TELEOSTOMI*.ORDER *ACTINOPTERI*.SUB-ORDER *PHYSOCLYSTI*.DIVISION *ACANTHOPTERYGII PERCIFORMES*.FAMILY *PERCIDÆ*.PERCH. *Perca fluviatilis*, Linnæus.

Commonly distributed.—In the Leicester Museum there is a cast of a specimen taken at Saddington, in 1885, by Mr. J. Benskin, which weighed just under three pounds. Mr. J. Smith presented one to the Museum, taken by Mr. Roche at Aylestone, 17th July, 1886, which weighed 2 lbs. 2 oz. Keen, the fishing-tackle maker of Church-gate, reports a fine Perch, taken at Wistow, some years ago, by Mr. Blakiston, which turned the scale at 5 lbs. In the early part of 1888, Thornton Reservoir, which absolutely swarmed with Perch, to the entire destruction of the Trout-fishing (see p. 190), was cleaned out and netted, when some fine Perch were taken, Mr. Macaulay reporting a brace which weighed 9 lbs., and Pinchen shewed me, amongst others, one which weighed  $3\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. from there.

I have taken, at Thornton, several specimens with blunt heads or rounded noses, evidently a malformation, which appears, however, persistent.

RUFFE. *Acerina cernua* (Linnæus).

“Daddy Ruffe,” “Jack Ruffe,” “Pope.”

According to Harley, “occurs in most of our canals and small streams, especially in those which take their rise in Charnwood Forest,” and I have seen it taken from the Soar at Aylestone.

LARGE-MOUTHED BLACK BASS. *Grystes salmoides* (Lacépède).

“Growler.”

In RUTLAND.—The Most Honourable the Marquis of Exeter writes me, in answer to my question if the Black Bass had been introduced into this county by him:—“No; only into Northamptonshire, though I have turned a good many into the Welland, and the fish may have mounted the stream where it divides Northamptonshire from Rutland. G. Watson, Esq., has, however, turned a good number of both Large and Small-mouthed Black Bass into the Welland below Rockingham Castle.” I print this, therefore, in case the fish be caught in the Welland from the Rutland or Leicestershire side.







SMALL-MOUTHED BLACK BASS. *Grystes dolomieu* (Lacépède).

The same remark applies to this as to the preceding; it is very probable, however, that it is not specifically distinct.

## DIVISION ACANTHOPTERYGII COTTO-SCOMBRIFORMES.

### FAMILY COTTIDÆ.

MILLER'S THUMB. *Cottus gobio*, Linnæus.

"Bullhead," "Tommy Logge."

Commonly distributed.—Harley noted it as common in the stream which flows through Bradgate Park.

## DIVISION ACANTHOPTERYGII GASTROSTEIFORMES.

### FAMILY GASTROSTEIDÆ.

THREE-SPINED STICKLEBACK. *Gastrosteus aculeatus*, Linnæus.

"Tiddler," "Jack Bannel," "Robin," "Soldier,"

"Stuttle," "Stut," "Tittle-bat."

Commonly distributed.

NINE-SPINED STICKLEBACK. *Gastrosteus pungitius*, Linnæus.

"Tinker."

Generally distributed, but perhaps not so common as the preceding.

## DIVISION ANACANTHINI GADOIDEI.

### FAMILY GADIDÆ.

BURBOT. *Lota vulgaris*, Cuvier.

"Burbolt," "Eel-pout."

Harley recorded it as "an irregular and uncertain visitant to the rivers of the county, save the Trent," where it occurs plentifully. It has been "occasionally taken in the Soar about Kegworth," and Harley once saw one taken in an eel-net at Zouch Mills, near Loughborough.

## SUB-ORDER *PHYSOSTOMI*.

### FAMILY CYPRINIDÆ.

CARP. *Cyprinus carpio*, Linnæus.

According to Harley, it occurs in some parts of the river Soar, and abounds in pools such as those of Groby and Saddington. There are large

Carp, so Col. Palmer informs me, at Owston, where there appear to be remains of ancient monastic "stews."

CRUCIAN CARP. *Carassius vulgaris*, Nilsson.

"Prussian Carp" (varieties or lean examples).

Occurs sparingly in some ponds of the counties.

BARBEL. *Barbus vulgaris*, Fleming.

According to Harley, it occurred occasionally in the Soar, near its junction with the Trent and Derwent, and was frequently caught below Loughborough.

GUDGEON. *Gobio fluviatilis*, Fleming.

Common in the Soar, and in various parts of the county. The largest I have seen have been taken at Thornton Reservoir.

ROACH. *Leuciscus rutilus* (Linnæus).

Commonly distributed.—The Museum possesses a model of a specimen which turned the scale at two pounds. The fish was taken in Narborough waters, 5th October, 1886, by Mr. J. Pole, who kindly lent it for casting. The 'Leicester Journal' of 13th Jan., 1888, gives the following:—"Angling.—There were extraordinary takes of large Roach from the Leicester waters on Saturday last by T. Cluley, who caught, from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., 58 fish weighing 48 lbs.; G. Palmer, same time and place, 22½ lbs., largest fish 1 lb. 6 oz., smallest 8 oz.; Monday last, T. Cluley took 40 fish, weight 27½ lbs. In the two days not less than 200 lbs. of fish were caught by different anglers, and all were taken with a green grub found amongst the weeds in the river. W. Burgess took in one day 13 fish, weighing 9 lbs.; another day, 9 fish weighing 6½ lbs." These fishes, many of which I saw, were taken at the junction of the Soar with the Canal, just below the Aylestone Mill.

Mr. B. G. Broadhead caught a Roach weighing 2 lbs. 2 oz. in the Aylestone Mill waters, on 15th Dec., 1888.

CHUB. *Leuciscus cephalus* (Linnæus).

Generally distributed, attaining a good size.—A specimen taken at Aylestone, 6th February, 1883, by Mr. A. Smith, weighed 4½ lbs. Mr. T. Lumb, of Wharf Street, presented to the Museum an exceedingly fine specimen weighing 5 lbs. 2½ oz., taken in the river Soar at Narborough on 27th Feb., 1883. The same expert angler presented another, weighing 5 lbs. ½ oz., which he took in the afternoon of 6th Feb., 1885, whilst ledgering with fine tackle and cheese-paste. This fish afforded capital sport, some difficulty being





experienced in landing it. Strange to say, these two fishes were taken in the same swim of water about eighty yards apart. Both were in splendid condition. Mr. G. Lillingston Johnson, however, informs me that he once caught one of 6 lbs. at Thornton Reservoir, which is now preserved and in his possession.

DACE. *Leuciscus vulgaris*, Fleming.

Generally distributed in sharp streams and "backwaters" of the rivers.—A specimen weighing 12 oz. was taken by Mr. J. W. Benskin in the Soar near Barrow some years ago.

RUDD. *Leuciscus erythrophthalmus* (Linnæus).  
"Red-eye."

Harley stated that it occasionally occurs in the Soar; and, according to Mr. Macaulay, it exists in a pool at Welham, and attains a large size, two having been taken, in 1888, over 2 lbs. each.

MINNOW. *Leuciscus phoxinus* (Linnæus).

Generally distributed in sharp streams.

TENCH. *Tinca vulgaris*, Cuvier.

Not very common, Harley stating that "it does not frequent our streams and rivers, prevailing only in ponds, stagnant pools, reservoirs, and stews." He also referred to its well-known habit of smacking its lips when near the surface in summer-time. Col. Palmer informs me that, at Owston, large Tench are found with the Carp in the "stews" previously referred to.

COMMON BREAM. *Abramis brama* (Linnæus).  
"Yellow Bream."

Generally distributed in the Soar, where, at Kegworth, I have seen many shoals of large-sized fish. One taken in this river weighed 7 lbs.

WHITE BREAM. *Abramis blicca* (Bloch).  
"Bream-flat."

Occurs in the Soar and Trent, and Harley said:—"Abundant in the Soar at Aylestone, also at Barrow."

BLEAK. *Alburnus lucidus*, Häckel.

Widely diffused, according to Harley.



LOACH. *Nemachilus barbatulus* (Linnæus).

“Bearded Loach,” “Stone-Loach,” “Tommy-Loach” (‘Leicestershire Proverbs’).

Generally distributed, and Harley recorded it from the rivers Anker, Sence, Smite, Soar, Trent, and Wreake.

SPINED LOACH. *Cobitis tanja*, Linnæus.

“Groundling.”

Occurs sparingly in some few streams.—Harley wrote:—“Inhabits the Soar, Trent, and Wreake.” I took a specimen in a small stream at Aylestone on 14th April, 1883.

## FAMILY ESOCIDÆ.

PIKE. *Esox lucius*, Linnæus.

“Jack.”

Commonly distributed, attaining a large size in pools such as those of Bosworth and Saddington.—In 1811 Harley saw a brace of Pike, taken in a pond at Dishley, the property of Mr. March Phillipps, each of which weighed over 25 lbs. Keen tells me that, sometime about 1845-50, one of 33 lbs. (which he saw) was netted at Barrow Mill-dam after having broken through three trammel-nets. I saw a mounted specimen at Bosworth House, which was captured in April, 1869, in Bosworth Pool, and weighed 26 lbs. The Museum Donation-book records, under date 20th Aug., 1872, the capture of one at Barrow-on-Soar, which weighed  $17\frac{3}{4}$  lbs., and measured 3 feet 6 inches in length. It was presented to the Museum by Mr. Noble, of Barrow.

Col. Palmer wrote, in 1888:—“Some very large Pike have been taken out of the water at Withcote at different periods; one, a diseased fish, some fifteen years since, was 42 inches from snout to tail-fin, but only weighed about 13 lbs. It seemed to have a fungus growth, and we had to bury it at once. Another evidently very large fish was taken, about three years since, in my absence from home, in fact without permission, and sent away. From the account it was supposed to weigh 24 or 25 lbs. It was said to have rushed at the man who was fishing for small fry, and took rod and line out of his hand, and was choked in the weeds. It was no doubt the same fish that I saw one day snap at a Swallow which skimmed the water, or perhaps touched him.”

In RUTLAND.—Commonly distributed.—Lord Gainsborough informs me that Pike of 15 and 18 lbs. are frequently caught in the ponds at Exton; the largest yet taken—which I have seen—is one of  $23\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., and is in the Museum at





Exton Park. The Right Hon. Gerard Noel kindly informs me that, at the same time and place (Lower Lake, Exton Park, about 1880), another was taken of over 22 lbs., which is now in his possession. Both were caught the same night. Mr. Finch writes me (in 1888) that the largest taken in Burley Ponds was captured by Mr. W. Neal a few years back, and weighed 22 lbs.

## FAMILY SALMONIDÆ.

SALMON. *Salmo salar*, Linnæus.

Harley stated that it occurred in the Soar about Kegworth and near Loughborough, and also that it had been taken at Zouch Mills, near Loughborough. At the present day, however, it must be regarded as rare, although I heard of one taken at Ratcliffe Lock, in 1883, which was said to have weighed 26 lbs.

The 'Leicester Daily Post' of 21st Feb., 1884, recorded, under the heading "Unseasonable Salmon," that some men, two of whom rejoiced in the *soubriquets* of "Buck" and "Pretty," were fined for taking a Salmon on 19th Jan., 1884, which, they explained, they had seen in the stream at Dishley, pursued by a mob of men and boys.

COMMON TROUT. *Salmo fario*, Linnæus.

"Brook-Trout."

Sparingly distributed in the county.—At Bradgate, where it is strictly preserved, it is abundant, and attains a fair size. Thornton Reservoir was, however, at one time, so I am informed by Mr. G. Lillingston Johnson, of Ulverscroft, "the best bit of still-water Trout-fishing in England," a fact corroborated by Mr. J. Garle Browne, of Leamington, who says:—"As a Trout-lake, unrivalled for the great average weight of the fish," he having taken *many* fishes, as I find from extracts from his diary (kindly forwarded to me), of 3 lbs. and 4 lbs. weight. One was taken on 11th Aug., 1859, of 4 lbs. 13 oz.; and another on the 16th, of 4 lbs. 9 oz. On 1st. Sept., 1860, he took eight fish, the total weight of which was 30 lbs. 4 oz.—an average of 3 lbs. 12½ oz., or nearly 4 lbs. each. On 13th May, 1861, he caught a fish of 4 lbs. 8 oz.; on the 16th, one of 4 lbs. 10 oz.; and in five consecutive days—May 13th to 17th, 1861—he killed twenty-seven fish, only eight of which were under 3 lbs., and only two of these just under 2 lbs.; the largest being 4 lbs. 10 oz., and the whole twenty-seven fish making the remarkable aggregate weight of 87 lbs.! The finest fish, however, killed by Mr. Browne was one, on 19th August, 1859, which weighed 6 lbs. 1 oz., although he says:—"I hooked and played one Trout for some time, which leaped out of the water several times, giving me a good

sight of him; he seemed nearly three feet in length, and I estimated his weight at from 8 to 10 lbs. He took out at a rush as much line as a 20 lb. Salmon I had in the river Shin in Sutherlandshire; but he broke my casting-line, which was very fine gut, and I thus lost him." All these fish were taken by Scotch lake-flies, and before the Fishing Club was formed.

Mr G. L. Johnson tells me that, after the formation of the Club, "6 lbs. was the largest Trout caught. Mr. Charles Packe, of Stretton Hall, Mr. W. B. Farnham, of Quorn, and I caught one apiece of that weight the same day."

The flesh of these Trout is reported to have been of an apricot colour, and of a singular excellence in flavour. The glories of Thornton have, however, alas! departed, probably for ever. First came a fungoid growth of the nature of *Saprolegnia ferax*; and then, by some means or another, Perch were introduced,—some say by fishermen emptying their bait-cans, though I do not know who would use Perch as bait, and the more probable explanation is that given by Mr. G. L. Johnson, who writes:—"The fishing was entirely ruined, unintentionally, by an owner on the hills who had a stew in which he kept Perch. In a flood, some small ones were washed down to the Reservoir, and the mischief was done, which can never be cured. Before that there were *no* Perch."

Mr. J. G. Browne writes, regarding the Trout in the two brooks connected with the Reservoir:—"In the *Desford brook*, which is a brook of good size (streams and small pools) *in which Grayling would thrive*, I feel sure—I fished this many years ago—Trout of 2 lbs. and upwards were not rare. The Markfield brook, which falls in at the head of the reservoir, is small, and after the reservoir was formed was a small spawning-ground mainly, and before the formation of the Reservoir I never heard it contained any large Trout, though in January of one year (I think 1862) I went up with the keeper (Massey) to see the fish spawning, and I saw one large fish, in a part of the brook I could almost have stridden over, which was busy spawning. I lay down on the turf, and placed my walking-stick on the ground, one end opposite the snout of the fish and the other at the tail, and the fish was nearly the length of my stick (quite 3 feet); his (or her) weight must have been 11 or 12 lbs."

Mr. Horn writes me that "In 1886, a Trout of 5 lbs. was taken by rod and line in the Eye River above Allexton, and at the same place two fish were seen fighting; the person seeing them fetched a gun—"tell it not in Gath"—and shot both: one was a Pike of 5 lbs., and the other a Trout of 3½ lbs."

In 1887, some Trout were introduced by the Angling Society into the river Soar, near Aylestone; and on 16th March, 1888, the second instalment of 530 yearling Trout were introduced, being purchased from the Marquis of Exeter's fishery, and Mr. W. T. Silk, the manager, who has kindly given me much information, writes that they "were a cross between *S. fario* and *S. ferox*, and grow to a large size and are very game."







GREAT NORTH AMERICAN LAKE-TROUT. *Salmo namaycush* (Walbaum).

Mentioned, under its specific synonym of *S. amethystinus* (Mitchill), at p. 392 'Fishing' (Badminton Library) as having been introduced into Northamptonshire, in 1873, by the Marquis of Exeter, who writes me:—"From twenty to thirty thousand of these have from time to time been turned into the river Gwash, co. Rutland, after being hatched at Burghley, but all my waters and ponds in which Trout of various kinds, and Black Bass had been bred or introduced are in Northamptonshire, and were transferred from thence to the Gwash and Welland (the latter only as regards Black Bass, though below Deeping I have given some ten or twenty thousand Trout Fry to the Fishing Club of that part of the Welland), and as, in the former river, there always have been plenty of good Trout, it can hardly be said that I introduced Trout into the County of Rutland."

AMERICAN BROOK-TROUT. *Salmo fontinalis* (Mitchill).

This species, which is really a Charr belonging to the sub-genus *Salvelini* of Günther, was introduced into Thornton Reservoir by the members of the Fishing Club sometime about 1878-80, and Mr. G. Lillingston Johnson kindly informs me that "they came from the breeding-ponds at Loch Leven. They did well, but we thought they got their food from the little Fresh-water Winkle, and so were not often caught, as they did not take the fly eagerly. There was an opinion prevalent that they took advantage of the flood at the overflow and went to the lower brook. I caught one 4 lbs. in weight." Mr. J. Garle Browne supplements this by saying:—" *Salmo fontinalis* were introduced at the instigation of my old friend, the late Mr. John Wright, surgeon at Markfield, but he told me they were a failure, and I never heard of their attaining any size. He lamented to me that they had ever been introduced into the water."

GRAYLING. *Thymallus vulgaris* (Nilsson).

Harley wrote:—"Appears to be limited to the Soar and its confluence with the Trent," but I have no knowledge of it, and doubt its occurrence in the upper Soar, although it may occur *at* its junction with the Trent, which is, I presume, what Harley meant.

## FAMILY LEPTOLEPIDÆ.

*Leptolepis concentricus* (Egerton).

This fossil fish is mentioned by Mr. Harrison\* as having been met with in the Lower Lias Limestone "First Floor," in a section of a large pit between Barrow and Sileby, in 1874.

\* 'Geol. Leicestershire and Rutland,' p. 37.

*Leptolepis sprattiformis* (?) \*

Has occurred in the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar, according to Mr. H. E. Quilter.† Mr. Woodward, however, deletes this entirely, and it is, therefore, if not attributable to the preceding species, probably derived through *Heterolepidotus serrulatus*! See p. 194.

## FAMILY MURÆNIDÆ.

EEL. *Anguilla vulgaris*, Fleming.

Commonly distributed in both counties.

BROAD-NOSED EEL. *Anguilla latirostris* (Risso).

“Grig.”

May occur, but Günther, in his “Introduction to the Study of Fishes” (p. 673), says this species prefers the neighbourhood of the sea to distant inland waters; the “Broad-nosed” Eel reported to me is probably, therefore, only a variety of the preceding, and not the true *A. latirostris*.

## SUB-ORDER HOLOSTEI.

## FAMILY PYCNODONTIDÆ.

*Mesodon liassicus* (Egerton).

In the ‘Memoirs of the Geological Survey’ (Fishes, 1855), Decade VIII., it is recorded that “this interesting specimen (figured on Pl. X.) was brought to light during the operation of transferring the fine collection of fossil fishes in the British Museum, from the cases in Room 6, to their new position in Room 2. It is supposed to have been derived from the Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, and, although far from perfect, is, nevertheless, sufficiently so to leave no doubt as to its natural affinities.”

The species is also recorded from Barrow, by Jno. Morris, F.G.S., in his ‘Catalogue of British Fossils,’ 1854, p. 342.

## FAMILY PHOLIDOPHORIDÆ.

*Pholidophorus nitidus* (Egerton).

The British Museum possesses three specimens, presented by Mr. Ed. Wilson, F.G.S., Curator of the Bristol Museum, obtained by him from the Rhætic Paper-Shales of Wigston, and fully described by Mr. A. S. Woodward.‡

\* *Leptolepis sprattiformis* (Blainville), has as yet occurred only in the Solenhofen beds.

† “The Lower Lias of Leicestershire,” ‘Geol. Mag.’, dec. iii., vol. iii., p. 61.

‡ ‘Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.’ April, 1889, pp. 22-3





The Leicester Museum possesses some portions collected by Mr. Harrison from the Rhætic Shales, Spinney Hills, which he informs me is the same recorded by him \* under the name of *P. mottiana*, and which I submitted to Mr. Woodward, who was unable to determine it as being specifically distinct from *P. nitidus*. (See also his remarks, p. 23 'Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' April, 1889).

*Pholidophorus hastingsiæ*, Agassiz.

Recorded from Barrow-on-Soar by Morris † and by Ansted,‡ and the Museum possesses a fairly good specimen from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), at that place.

The Dublin Museum possesses three specimens attributed to this species, from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar. Purchased from the late Mr. Wm. Lee.

*Pholidophorus stricklandi*, Agassiz.

Reported from Barrow-on-Soar by Morris † and by Ansted.‡ Mr. Harrison § records the finding of this species, in 1874, in the Limestone "First Floor," in a section of a large pit between Barrow and Sileby, and the Museum possesses three specimens (one of them very good) from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar.

*Pholidophorus egertoni*.

A mythical species, recorded, by some mistake, by Mr. H. E. Quilter in his 'Lower Lias of Leicestershire.' || This must, therefore, be expunged from the lists.

## FAMILY EUGNATHIDÆ.

*Heterolepidotus serrulatus* (Agassiz).

Recorded under its former generic name of *Lepidotus*, by Morris,¶ from the Lias, Barrow-on-Soar. The species is also mentioned by Ansted ‡ as occurring at the same place. The Dublin Museum possesses four specimens from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, purchased from the late Mr. Wm. Lee. I was so fortunate as to be allowed to examine a fine specimen, wanting only the caudal portion,

\* 'Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.,' vol. xxxii., 1876, p. 212. See also 'Geol. Leicestershire and Rutland,' p. 35.

† 'Catal. Brit. Foss.,' 1854, p. 338.

‡ 'Physical Geog. and Geol. County of Leicester,' p. 56.

§ 'Geol. Leicestershire and Rutland,' p. 37.

|| 'Geol. Mag.,' dec. iii., vol. iii., p. 61.

¶ 'Catal. Brit. Foss.,' 1854, p. 332.

which was found some years ago at Barrow-on-Soar, and is now in the possession of the Messrs. Ellis, who, however, kindly allowed me to take a cast from it for our Museum. Since then, however, they have kindly presented us with the counterpart (No. <sup>385</sup>/<sub>789</sub>)—a beautiful specimen, and so rare that, as Mr. Raven informs me, no others have occurred since this was found, some ten years ago.

It is most deplorable that a local F.G.S. should have named this fine example—18 inches in length—as “Probably *Leptolepis sprattiformis*”! yet this is the designation it bears upon the new office-chart issued by the Messrs. Ellis.

*Ptycholepis minor* (Egerton).

This rare fish was figured and described in ‘Memoirs of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom’ (Fishes, 1852), decade vi., plate vii., from a specimen from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar, the two halves of which were in the possession of Sir Philip de Grey Egerton and the Earl of Enniskillen. The species is also recorded from the same place by Morris.\*

## FAMILY LEPIDOTIDÆ.

*Sargodon* (? *tomicus*), Plieninger.

To Mr. H. E. Quilter is due the credit of having first discovered teeth of this genus (new to the Leicestershire list), in the Rhætic bone-beds, Spinney Hills. They were submitted to Mr. A. S. Woodward, who, having examined a number of specimens collected by Mr. Quilter and now acquired by the Museum, writes †:—“A few minute hemispherical dental crowns are of the form described as *Sphærodus* by Agassiz. This name, however, has been given to the rounded crushing teeth of very distinct genera, and has thus only a provisional significance. In the present case, it is not unlikely that the fossils pertain to the Lepidotoid Ganoid of which the front teeth are known as *Sargodon*. The largest example is not more than three millims. in diameter; and all the specimens are distinguished from the rounded teeth of the Triassic genus *Colobodius* by the absence of an apical tubercle. The cutting teeth of *Sargodon* do not occur in Mr. Quilter’s collection.”

## FAMILY SEMIONOTIDÆ.

*Dapedius dorsalis* (Agassiz).

The British Museum possesses specimens from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar.

\* ‘Catal. Brit. Foss.’ p. 342.

† ‘Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.’ April, 1889, p. 20.







*Dapedius monilifer* (Agassiz).

The British Museum contains specimens from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar. The species is also recorded from the same locality by Morris.\*

*Dapedius orbis* (Agassiz).

Agassiz describes, *tome* ii., p. 218, and figures in the atlas, vol. ii., tab. 25<sup>d</sup>, a very ill-preserved example, minus the tail, of this species, from Barrow-on-Soar.

The species is recorded from the same locality by Morris,\* by Ansted,† and by Harrison,‡ who states that, in the Lower Lias, "good specimens of a fish with a remarkably rounded outline, called *Dapedius orbis*, are often found."

The Dublin Museum possesses twenty-eight specimens from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, purchased from the late Mr. Wm. Lee; and the Derby and Warwick Museums each possess a specimen from the same place.

The Leicester Museum contains many, including a small specimen (imperfect) from Barrow, from the collection of the late Mr. Benwell Smith, and quite a number of portions of specimens presented by the Messrs. Ellis in 1889, each of which exhibits some characteristic lacking in the others, and it is highly probable that amongst these may be found species other than *orbis*; but, as the taxonomy of *Dapedius* (= *Tetragonolepis*, Agassiz) appears to be little known, and in a most unsatisfactory state, it may be well to await a revision of this genus, before attempting to differentiate the many specimens I have collected, of the so-called *Dapedius orbis*.

*Dapedius striolatus* (Agassiz).

The British Museum possesses specimens from the Lower Lias (*planorbis* zone), Barrow-on-Soar.

## ORDER CHONDROSTEI.

### FAMILY PALÆONISCIDÆ.

*Cosmolepis egertoni* (Egerton *ex* Agassiz' MS.).

This very rare fossil, which occurs in no part of the world save Barrow-on-Soar, is recorded from the Lower Lias at that place by Morris,§ by Egerton,|| and by Ansted.† The British Museum contains the type and one other specimen, and in

\* 'Catal. Brit. Foss.,' 1854, p. 324.

† 'Physical Geog. and Geol. Co. Leicester,' p. 56.

‡ 'Geol. L. and R.,' p. 37.

§ 'Catal. Brit. Foss.,' p. 323.

|| 'Memoirs Geol. Survey' (Fishes, 1858), dec. ix., pl. i.

July, 1889, the Leicester Museum became possessed for the first time, through the exertions of Mr. John Raven, of part of a specimen from the *planorbis* zone shewing finely preserved and beautifully sculptured scales. I know of no other specimens.

*Gyrolepis* \* *albertii*, Agassiz.

Mr. Harrison† found, in the Rhætic bone-beds, Spinney Hills, many scales now in the Museum, and Mr. Quilter has obtained, from the same place, a large number of scales‡ which have now been also acquired by the Museum.

*Rhadinichthys ornatissimus* (Agassiz).

This species is recorded,§ under the name of *Palæoniscus ornatissimus*, from the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Coal-Field.

*Elonichthys egertoni* (Egerton, ex Agassiz' MS.).

Recorded,§ under the name of *Palæoniscus egertoni*, from the same locality as the preceding species.

*Palæoniscus*, Agassiz (sp. ind.).

Recorded from the same locality, and probably referrible to one of the preceding species.

*Amblypterus*, Agassiz.

Recorded § from the same locality as the preceding species, but some mistake has been made, as Mr. Woodward kindly informs me that "The genus has been shown by Traquair not to occur in the Carboniferous. The name was doubtless given to some indeterminable Palæoniscid scales."

## FAMILY PLATYSOMIDÆ.

*Platysomus parvulus*, Agassiz.

Recorded,§ as *P. striatus*, from the same locality as the preceding species, but, as *striatus* appears to be confined to the Permian, *P. parvulus* was probably intended.

*Amphicentrum*, Young (sp. ind.).

Recorded § from the same locality as the preceding species.

\* This genus is recorded by W. Molyneux, F.G.S., in Appendix 'Burton-on-Trent, etc., etc.,' as occurring in the Coal Measures, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, but this is a mistake (see Traquair, 'Q. J. G. S.,' 1877, p. 567), and it may be referrible to *Acrolepis*.

† 'Geol. L. and R.,' p. 35.

‡ Recorded by A. S. Woodward, 'Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' April, 1889, p. 20.

§ Appendix, 'Burton-on-Trent: its History, its Waters, and its Breweries,' by W. Molyneux, F.G.S.





## FAMILY BELONORHYNCHIDÆ.

*Belonorhynchus acutus* (Agassiz).

The Museum contains part of a jaw with teeth (a nice specimen) from the Lower Lias, Barrow-on-Soar, and Mr. Harrison records,\* under its former generic name of *Belonostomus*, the finding of this, in 1874, in the Limestone "Bank Hurs," in a section of a large pit between Barrow and Sileby.

*Saurichthys acuminatus*, Agassiz.

The Museum possesses over twenty-five teeth, collected by Mr. Harrison from the Rhætic bone-bed, Spinney Hills; also a quantity of scales from the same place, labelled as belonging to this species, but this must be an error, as Mr. A. S. Woodward informs me "*Saurichthys* is a long-snouted fish without scales." (See, however, 'Quarterly Journ. Geol. Soc.,' 1877, p. 569.)

A number of teeth collected from the same place by Mr. Quilter, and described by Mr. Woodward,† have since been acquired by the Museum, which also contains several labelled *Saurichthys apicalis*,‡ Agassiz, and there are some in Mr. Quilter's collection, but Mr. Woodward considers that the two species are probably referrible to one, as, no doubt, there is "considerable variation in the dentition of different parts of the mouth."

## FAMILY CHONDROSTEIDÆ.

*Chondrosteus* (?), Agassiz (sp. ind.).

When visiting the Barrow-on-Soar Lias lime-pits some years ago, I was kindly presented, by the Messrs. Ellis, with two slabs shewing portions of a fish, which, being unable to determine, I referred, as usual, to Mr. A. S. Woodward, whose kindness to me in such matters it is impossible to over-estimate, and who replied:—"This unique and interesting fossil is the caudal portion of a fish evidently related to *Chondrosteus*, well known from Lyme Regis, and probably pertains to the same genus. The fulcral scutes upon the upper lobe of the tail are equally large, but too much broken to exhibit their precise form and proportions. A few of the characteristic oat-shaped scales upon the side of the caudal lobe are preserved; and there are several distinct, broad, hour-glass-shaped hæmal spines supporting the caudal fin. The latter consists of rays articulated as in *Chondrosteus*, but the outline of the fin is not shown. Remains of the dorsal and anal fins are also preserved in their natural situations, but each fin is much broken and scattered. The dorsal is considerably in advance

\* 'Geol. Leicestershire and Rutland,' p. 37.

† 'Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' April, 1889, pp. 20-21.

‡ Mentioned 'Geol. Leicestershire and Rutland,' p. 35.

of the anal, exactly as in *Chondrosteus*." The discovery of this specimen is briefly mentioned by Mr. A. S. Woodward in his paper on the "Palæontology of Sturgeons," 'Proc. Geol. Assoc.,' May, 1889, p. 44. It will, however, be fully described and figured by myself in a forthcoming part of the 'Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' being specially interesting as having never been discovered until now from any part of the world save Lyme Regis.

## FAMILY ACIPENSERIDÆ.

STURGEON. *Acipenser sturio*, Linnæus.

A rare straggler of accidental occurrence.—Harley said a specimen was taken in the Soar, below Loughborough, but gave no date. Mr. Ingram informs me that some years ago a small specimen was taken in the little river Smite, near to Belvoir.

## ORDER CROSSOPTERYGII.

### FAMILY OSTEOLEPIDÆ.

*Megalichthys hibberti*, Agassiz.

This species is recorded\* from the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Coal-Field, and also under the name of *Diplopterus carbonarius*.

*Rhomboptychius*, Huxley (sp. ind.).

Recorded\* from the same locality as the preceding species.

### FAMILY RHIZODONTIDÆ.

*Rhizodopsis*, Williamson (sp. ind.).

Recorded\* from the same locality as the preceding species, and is probably *Rhizodopsis sauroides*. Molyneux also mentions *Rhizodus granulatus* and *minor*, which are almost certainly referrible to this species.

### FAMILY CÆLACANTHIDÆ.

*Cœlacanthus lepturus*, Agassiz.

Recorded\* from the same locality as the preceding species.

\* Appendix 'Burton-on-Trent: its History, its Waters, and its Breweries,' by W. Molyneux, F.G.S.







SUB-CLASS *ELASMOBRANCHII*.ORDER *SELACHII*.SUB-ORDER *ASTEROSPONDYLI*.FAMILY *CESTRACIONTIDÆ*.

*Strophodus magnus*, Agassiz.

In RUTLAND.—Teeth of this Shark are recorded by Mr. R. Etheridge, F.R.S.,\* as extremely abundant in the “Lincolnshire Limestone.”

*Asteracanthus ornatissimus*, Agassiz.

In RUTLAND.—Teeth are recorded by Mr. Etheridge,\* under their later name of *Strophodus subreticulatus*, Agassiz,† as extremely abundant in the “Lincolnshire Limestone.”

*Acrodus minimus*, Agassiz.

The Museum contains twenty-three teeth, collected by Mr. Harrison from the Rhætic bone-bed, Spinney Hills, and has now acquired others, found by Mr. Quilter at the same place, and mentioned by Mr. A. S. Woodward.‡

*Acrodus* § *keuperinus* (Murchison and Strickland).

Remains of this Triassic Shark have occurred in the Upper Keuper Sandstone, in a cutting near the Dane Hills, and were recorded, under their former generic name of *Hybodus*, by Mr. W. J. Harrison,|| who wrote:—“Here we found a portion of a fine Ichthyodorulite, the front spine which supported the large dorsal fin, probably of a fish, named *Hybodus*. It is of a light-brown hue, 4 inches long, and the exterior surface beautifully fluted.” This fine specimen is still in the Museum, which also contains some teeth mentioned by Mr. Harrison as having been found at the same place, and a spine and tooth from the Upper Keuper Sandstone, Shoulder of Mutton Hill, near Leicester.

*Acrodus*, Agassiz (sp. ind.).

Recorded by Mr. A. J. Jukes Brown, F.G.S., from the Lower Lias (*semicostatus*

\* Appendix ‘Mem. Geol. Survey,’ 1875, p. 283.

† These teeth are now proved to belong to the Shark, whose dorsal fin-spine was named *Asteracanthus ornatissimus*, by Agassiz, in 1837, which name has precedence by one year.

‡ ‘Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,’ April, 1889, p. 19.

§ Formerly *Hybodus*, but now referred to the genus *Acrodus* by A. Smith Woodward, ‘Ann. and Mag. of Nat. Hist.,’ April, 1889, p. 297.

|| ‘Geol. of Leicestershire and Rutland,’ p. 33.

zone), Plungar (see "Geol. South-West Part of Lincolnshire, etc.," 'Mem. Geol. Survey,' p. 125).

Teeth appear to have been found by Mr. Harrison\* in the Upper Keuper Sandstone, in a cutting near the Dane Hills, but none of these are in the Museum.

*Hybodus crassus*, Agassiz.

IN RUTLAND.—Remains of this have hitherto been attributed to the Inferior Oolite, Braunston, Oakham, but Mr. A. S. Woodward, at p. 301 'Catalogue of Fossil Fishes,' writes:—"47,144. Type specimen of *Hybodus crassus*, Agassiz, described and figured, *tom. cit.*, p. 47, pl. x, fig. 23, said to have been obtained from the Inferior Oolite of Braunston, Oakham; the locality cannot be accurate, and is given by Agassiz as Rodmore Pits, near Towcester."

*Hybodus cloacinus*, Quenstedt.

To Mr. W. J. Harrison appears to belong the honour of having first found some teeth and fragments of teeth and portions of two or more fin-spines in the Rhætic bone-bed, Spinney Hills, identical with those assigned by Quenstedt to *H. cloacinus*, hitherto described only from the Rhætics of Würtemberg; and the Museum has lately acquired a number of teeth (not quite so fine) from Mr. Quilter, found by him in the same place, and fully described by Mr. A. S. Woodward.†

*Hybodus minor*, Agassiz.

The Museum possesses a nice tooth of this small Shark, found by Mr. Harrison in the Rhætic bone-beds, Spinney Hills,‡ and has lately acquired quite a quantity of teeth, collected by Mr. H. E. Quilter from the same place, and described by Mr. A. S. Woodward,§ who thinks it is quite possible that the teeth now assigned to *Hybodus minor* will eventually prove to belong to the Shark whose dorsal fin-spines, found in the Rhætics, are known as "*Nemacanthus*,"—and in this case the small fragment mentioned by him at p. 19 would be assigned to the present species, as would also portions of three or four spines recorded by Mr. Harrison under the names of *Nemacanthus monilifer* and *Hybodus minor*,‡ and now in the Museum.

The Museum of Practical Geology, Jermyn St., London, possesses a spine (*Nemacanthus monilifer*) from the Rhætics of Wigston.

\* 'Geol. of Leicestershire and Rutland,' p. 33.

† 'Transactions Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' April, 1889, p. 19.

‡ 'Geol. Leicestershire and Rutland,' p. 35.

§ 'Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' April, 1889, p. 18.





Mr. Quilter appears also to have found "an imperfect hooked cephalic spine (*Sphenonchus*) of a Hybodont Shark," which may belong to this, or to an allied species. (See 'Trans. Leicester Lit. and Phil. Soc.,' April, 1889, p. 20.)

*Hybodus*, Agassiz (sp. inc.).

The Museum possesses a tooth from the Lower Lias (*Bucklandi* zone), Crown Hill, Evington.

The Museum of Practical Geology, Jermyn St., London, possesses a spine from the Rhætics of Wigston.

A tooth, apparently referrible to this genus, was found by Mr. E. Wilson, F.G.S., from the Middle Lias Marlstone, Belvoir, and recorded at p. 158 'Mid. Nat.,' vol. viii.

In RUTLAND.—According to Mr. R. Etheridge, F.R.S., remains have been found in the Great Oolite, Belmesthorpe (see Appendix 'Memoirs of the Geological Survey,' 1875, p. 291).

*Cladodus* = (?) *Sphenacanthus*, Agassiz.

Teeth are reported from the Coal Measures, Ashby-de-la-Zouch Coal-Field (see Appendix 'Burton-on-Trent: its History, its Waters, and its Breweries,' by W. Molyneux, F.G.S., 1869); Mr. A. S. Woodward kindly informs me:—"The Coal-Measure '*Cladodus*' is not *Hybodus*, and I think it is very doubtful if it be the same as the true *Cladodus*, Agassiz. In the British Museum Catalogue, just published, I have assigned the Coal-Measure teeth to *Sphenacanthus*, Agassiz."

## FAMILY COCHLIODONTIDÆ (? CESTRACIONTIDÆ).

*Pleuroplax attheyi* (Barkas).

Reported from the Ashby Coal-Field by W. Molyneux (Appendix *op. cit.*), under its former manuscript name of *Pæcilodus angustus*.

*Pleuroplax rankinei* (Hancock and Atthey).

Reported from the Ashby Coal-Field (Appendix *op. cit.*) under its former generic name of *Pleurodus*.

*Pleuroplax*, A. S. Woodward (sp. ind.).

Reported, under the name of *Pleurodus*, from the same place as the preceding, and probably referrible to one of the above species.

*Helodus simplex*, Agassiz.

Recorded from the same place as the preceding.



SUB-ORDER *TECTOSPONDYLI*.

## FAMILY PETALODONTIDÆ.

*Otenoptychius apicalis*, Agassiz.

The Museum of Practical Geology, Jermyn St., London, possesses a tooth from the Coal Measures, Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Also reported from the same locality by W. Molyneux (Appendix *op. cit.*).

*Petalodus*, Owen (sp. ind.).

Recorded twice from the same locality as the preceding species (Appendix *op. cit.*\*), but Mr. A. S. Woodward writes me:—"The so-called 'Petalodus' of the Coal Measures may, in many cases, be a side-tooth of *Janassa* ('*Climaxodus*')."

## ORDER ICHTHYOTOMI.

## FAMILY PLEURACANTHIDÆ.

*Diplodus gibbosus*, Agassiz.

Teeth have been recorded† from the Ashby Coal-Field (Appendix *op. cit.*), and Mr. A. S. Woodward writes me:—"Pleuracanthus, Agassiz, is the correct name of the genus to which the spines are attributed, and *Diplodus* is certainly the tooth of this: but, as we do not know to which species of *Pleuracanthus* the *Diplodus gibbosus* pertains, the latter name must be provisionally kept."

SUB-CLASS *MARSIPOBRANCHII*.

## FAMILY PETROMYZONTIDÆ.

LAMPERN. *Petromyzon fluviatilis*, Linnæus.

"River Lamprey."

Sparingly found in some of the streams of the county.

FRINGE-LIPPED LAMPERN. *Petromyzon branchialis*, Linnæus.

"Small Lampern," "Pride."

Sparingly found in some of the streams of the county.

\* I find also recorded in this book:—"Small tooth with three cutting edges (new). *Onchus* sp. Fin defence, plain, slightly curved,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length. Curiously-ornamented bones, etc." Of these, which cannot be determined with certainty, it is sufficient to say that *Onchus* proper does not occur in the Carboniferous, but that the "fin-defence" is probably a fin-spine of *Acanthodes*.

† As also under its synonym of *minutus*.





## ADDENDA.

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### CLASS PISCES.

In June, 1889, Mr. J. G. E. MacLachlan brought to me, from Barrow-on-Soar, a slab of Lower Lias limestone exhibiting the head of a small fish, which, being unknown to me, I submitted to Mr. A. S. Woodward, who tells me that it is undoubtedly new to science, and, although it may prove to be allied to the *Belonorhynchidae*, yet, from the imperfect character of the mandible—part of which was probably thrown away on the counterpart as valueless!—its exact position cannot be satisfactorily determined until another specimen turns up. This unique fossil (No.  $\frac{378}{189}$ ) has been generously presented to the Leicester Museum by the finder, Mr. MacLachlan.

*Chondrosteus* (?) (pp. 197-8).

I was fortunate in being able, on 9th August, 1889, through Mr. John Raven, acting for the Messrs. Ellis, to add to the Leicester Museum a slab and counterpart containing the greater portion of the pectoral fin, and some of the osseous plates of the head, of this rare and interesting fish, making the second specimen now known from the Lower Lias of Barrow-on-Soar, and forming a welcome addition as exhibiting parts missing in the former example. This (No.  $\frac{479}{189}$ ), with the other, will shortly be figured and described.









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## ERRATA.

Page 37, line 1—for Mr. T. Griffiths, read Mr. F. Griffith.  
     „ „ line 26—for 9th Dec., read 10th Dec.













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